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THE MONTH

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SOUTH AFRICAN TREASON TRIAL

F. H. LAWTON

A SHONA ECLOGUE

CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

TOWARDS A NEW APOLOGETIC

R. A. KNOX

MR. BETJEMAN AS THINKER

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LONGMANS

SOUTH AFRICAN TREASON TRIAL

By

F. H. LAWTON

IN MAY 1956 the South African Minister of Justice, Mr. Swart, announced in Parliament that charges of treason were being prepared against 200 persons. In the early hours of 5 December 1956, 140 persons living in the Cape, Natal and the Transvaal were arrested. Those living in the Cape and Natal were flown to Pretoria in military planes and then taken to the prison in Johannesburg. A few days later another eleven were arrested, as a result, so said the police, of fresh evidence and information obtained from the first arrests. A few more arrests were made afterwards, bringing the total of accused to 156; 105 Africans, 23 Europeans, 21 Indians and 7 Coloureds—138 men and 18 women. After a preliminary investigation before a magistrate lasting fourteen months, ninety-two persons were committed for trial. On 1 August 1958 the trial opened at Pretoria in a disused synagogue. This synagogue had been built by the first Jewish settlers there, the majority of whom were Balts. They built it in the style of architecture with which they were familiar. The result is that the scene of this great trial, which politically may represent the challenge of the South African Government to the infiltration of Communism, is a building having a markedly Russian appearance.

After two months of intermittent legal argument the prosecution withdrew the indictment, a step which could not have been taken in an English Court. On 19 January 1959 the trial re-started—but this time there were only thirty defendants; sixty-one of the remainder, it seems, are to be tried later. Considered by occupations the original defendants ranged from an anthropologist of international reputation (Professor Z. K. Matthews, formerly acting Principal of Fort Hare University College) to a number of lorry-drivers and labourers.

The trial seems to have three aspects, the political, moral and the legal. The political situation in South Africa is, of course, well known. The present-day population of the Union has been estimated at about 14,000,000, of whom some 9,460,000 are Africans, 431,000 Asians and 1,319,000 Coloureds.¹ Only persons of European descent can sit in Parliament, although provision was made in the Representation of Natives Act, 1936, for the election to the Senate of four white senators representing four election areas of non-whites. In the lower chamber there are three white representatives for the Africans and four for the Cape Coloureds. In the past ten years the Nationalist Government has initiated and procured the passing of a number of statutes which have gone some way to implement its policy of *apartheid*. Amongst these statutes are the Bantu Education Act, 1953, which was designed to give the State control of education for Africans, and the Native Resettlement Act, 1954, which gave the State powers of direction over Africans. Many non-white citizens of the Union—almost certainly a vast majority of those who are capable of forming a political opinion—are opposed to the policy of *apartheid* and would like to see a repeal of the statutes which have been passed to implement that policy. They can take no effective parliamentary action to procure a change of policy and law.

In the recent past Africans and Asians have organised campaigns against the existing *apartheid* laws: some have banded together to take extra-parliamentary action by such means as boycotts and strikes—and very effective means some of them have been. The success of the bus boycott in Johannesburg is an example. The treason trial can perhaps be regarded as an attempt by the Union Government to establish that banding together to take extra-parliamentary action for the political end of procuring a reversal of the policy of *apartheid* and a change of the statute-law implementing that policy amounts to High Treason under South African law. Between the Government and the virtually unfranchised millions of Africans stands the Supreme Court of South Africa and the South African tradition of the Rule of Law—a formidable obstacle for the Government to get over.

Whatever may be adjudged to be the position in law, what is the position in morals? The posing of this question revives memories of ancient disputations, of the writings of St. Augustine,

¹ *The Statesman's Year Book*, 1958.

John of Salisbury, St. Thomas Aquinas, Gerson, Boucher and Mariana and of the Franciscan Jean Petit's arguments in justification of the murder of the Duke of Orleans by the Duke of Burgundy which were discussed at the Council of Constance. In *The City of God*, St. Augustine, purporting to summarise Cicero, sought to define the qualities which a commonwealth should have.¹

Then he teaches the profit of definitions in all disputationes : and out of his definitions he gathers, that only there is a commonwealth, that is, only there is good estate of the commonyt, where justice and honesty have free execution whether it be by a king, by nobles, or by the whole people. But when the king becomes unjust, . . . or the nobles be unjust, . . . or the people themselves be unjust, . . . it is just no commonwealth at all.

Africans and Asians who are opposed to *apartheid* and anxious for guidance as to what kind of opposition to unjust laws is morally permissible, get little encouragement from St. Thomas Aquinas. In a paper read to the Thomas More Society of London,² Fr. Ivo Thomas, O.P., summarises St. Thomas' thought on this topic as follows:

Laws that are contrary to human good are not, says St. Thomas, binding in conscience, but unlike the laws which are contrary to divine good it is sometimes permissible or even obligatory to obey them, when that course will avoid scandal or disturbance. For law is made to secure the order and peace of the populace. Bad law militates against that end, but disobedience to it may militate against it even more. If it be not immediately contrary to divine good, bad law has broken its defining limits but has not passed altogether beyond them. Many who will not allow jurisprudence to take account of morality fail to recognise this point, as do those who believe that insistence on a higher standard of human actions than human law makes for anarchy. So far from holding that human law as such is morally suspect, St. Thomas maintains that it is in general an external source of moral principle. Even man-made law is binding in conscience. But human legislators are fallible and peccable, and when their enactments are unjust, they bind, if at all, in virtue of the law of nature which prescribes that a man should

¹ See John Healey's translation, edited 1931 by Sir Ernest Barker, Book 2, chapter 21, pages 81–82. Dent.

² Published in *The King's Good Servant*, edited by R. O'Sullivan (1948). Basil Blackwell.

live at peace with his fellows in human society. To live at peace with God is a higher duty still which may involve a refusal of obedience to man-made law.

The African barrister who is not allowed by South African law to share professional chambers with his white colleagues who have invited him to join them (as has happened in Johannesburg) must be tempted to doubt whether this law has any virtue at all; and so must the coloured nun who is bound by law to sleep in a separate building in the convent from her white sisters. It is fortunate for the South African Government that Mariana's book *De Rege*, which put forward the arguments for tyrannicide, is not readily available to Africans. It might be difficult to persuade them of its fallacies. What has saved the Union Government from more trouble than it has had already is the respect in which South Africans of all races seem to hold the law.

Despite the political and constitutional changes which have been made in the Union in the past ten years the Rule of Law still holds there—and between the accused in the treason trial and the prosecution are the three judges who are to try them. The course which the trial has taken so far seems to show that the Court is anxious to see that the accused get a fair trial according to law.

The indictment first preferred alleged in its main charge that the accused were guilty of High Treason in that during the period 1 October 1952 to 13 December 1956, while owing allegiance to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Second and her Government in the Union of South Africa, acting in concert and with common purpose and in breach and violation of such allegiance, unlawfully and with hostile intent against the State, they did, in their individual capacities and/or as members of one or more named associations, (a) disturb, impair or endanger the existence, the independence or safety or security or authority of the State, or (b) attempt or actively prepare to subvert or overthrow the State, or to disturb, impair or endanger the existence, independence or safety or security or authority of the State.

This wording has an odd ring to anyone familiar with the English law of treason. In 1351 a Declaration of Treasons was made which is now known as the Treason Act, 1351. The main part of it provided as follows:

Item, whereas divers opinions have been made before this time

in what case treason shall be said, and in what not; the King, at the request of the lords and of the commons, hath made a declaration in the manner as hereafter followeth, that is to say: when a man doth compass or imagine the death of our lord the King, or of our lady his Queen, or of their eldest son and heir; or if a man do violate the King's companion, or the King's eldest daughter unmarried, or the wife of the King's eldest son and heir; or if a man do levy war against the lord our King. . . .

Under the Treason Act, 1351 an Englishman knows what he must not do if he wants to avoid a traitor's death. This Act, however, does not apply to South Africa. There Roman-Dutch law applies and under that law treason is a development of the Roman law concept of *laesio majestatis* and is a common law offence, not a statutory one. In the leading South African textbook on Criminal Law by Gardiner and Lansdown treason is defined as follows: "High treason is committed by those who with a hostile intention disturb, impair or endanger the independence or safety of the state, or attempt or actively prepare to do so." The first indictment reproduced these words with drafting embellishments.

The clarity of the Treason Act, 1351, contrasts with the vagueness of the Roman-Dutch common law offence of treason. The legal argument which went on intermittently through August and September last was caused by this vagueness of the law. Under South African law, as under English law, anyone charged with a criminal offence is entitled to know exactly what he is alleged to have done so that he can prepare his defence. In the treason trial the prosecution sought to discharge its obligations in this respect by delivering particulars of overt acts of treason, that is to say by making what it claimed to be specific allegations. First, it was alleged that the accused had conspired together and with 152 named persons and with others unnamed to—

- (a) subvert, overthrow and destroy the State; and/or
- (b) make active preparation for a violent revolution against the State; and/or
- (c) disturb, impair or endanger the existence, independence, security or authority of the State; and/or
- (d) hinder, hamper and coerce the State; and/or
- (e) oppose and resist the authority of the State and in particular the power of the State to make and enforce laws; and/or

(f) establish a Communist State or some other State in the place of the existing State.

Secondly, it was alleged that in pursuance and furtherance of this conspiracy the accused with hostile intent in order to achieve and bring into effect and implement the aims of the conspiracy attended and addressed certain meetings and made and/or associated themselves with speeches and resolutions inciting, encouraging, exhorting or calculated to persuade people attending the meetings to support various political objects, particularly the campaign for the Freedom Charter. Thirdly, it was alleged that with the same intention and for the same purpose the accused wrote and published or caused to be written and published certain specified books, magazines, pamphlets and the like. Under these overt acts of treason, had they been adjudged sufficient—and they never were—any of the accused who had advocated, orally or in writing, the establishment in South Africa of a republic (a political object which finds favour with some members of the Nationalist Government) might have found themselves convicted of treason.

The defence counsel objected to these particulars on the ground of their vagueness which had been exacerbated by the use of the ungainly drafting device of "and/or." Mr. I. A. Maisels, Q.C., leading counsel for the defendants other than one, a barrister who defended himself, stated that an actuary had calculated that one part of the indictment alone alleged 498,015 possible overt acts of treason. The Court was sympathetic to these criticisms of the indictment and ordered further and better particulars to be delivered. The prosecution did so, but its new efforts were subjected to the same criticism of vagueness. In the end the prosecution withdrew the indictment, defeated perhaps by the drafting problems arising on an indictment charging ninety-one accused. With only thirty defendants in the dock difficulties of this kind should not arise.

What sort of a case are the prosecution making? If the particulars of overt acts of treason already delivered are any guide to its case (as they should be) the gravamen of it seems to be that the accused in their various capacities took part in activities connected with "the gathering of persons known as the Congress of the People for the adoption of the Freedom Charter"¹ and with the

¹ See first indictment, Part B, paragraph 4 (i).

implementing of the aims of that Charter. The prosecution also alleged in the first indictment that the defendants incited each other to make use of "extra-parliamentary, unconstitutional and illegal methods" to achieve their allegedly treasonable objects, such methods including campaigns against existing laws, particularly against the Bantu Education Act, 1953 and the Native Resettlement Act, 1954.¹

The Freedom Charter,² which was adopted at the Congress of the People held at Kliptown, Johannesburg, on 25 and 26 June 1955, might well have been drafted by many of the well-known nineteenth-century radicals. There is a marked nineteenth-century flavour about its style and content. Its preamble was as follows:

We, the people of South Africa, declare for all our country and the world to know: that South Africa belongs to all who live in it, black and white, and that no government can justly claim authority unless it is based on the will of all the peoples;

that our people have been robbed of their birthright to land, liberty and peace by a form of government founded on injustice and inequality;

that our country will never be prosperous or free until all our people live in brotherhood, enjoying equal rights and opportunities;

that only a democratic state, based on the will of all our people, can secure to all their birthright without distinction of colour, race, sex, or belief;

And therefore we, the people of South Africa, black and white together—equals, countrymen and brothers—adopt this Freedom Charter. And we pledge ourselves together sparing neither strength nor courage, until the democratic changes here set out have been won.

There followed demands for universal franchise, the nationalisation of mineral rights, equality before the law, equality of human rights, work and security, equal opportunities for all and finally for peace and friendship. The Charter ended with these words: "Let all who love their people and their country now say, as we say here: *These Freedoms we will fight for side by side, throughout our*

¹ See first indictment, Part B, paragraph 4 (iii) and (iv).

² Reproduced in Schedule E to the first indictment.

lives, until we have won our liberty." The use of the word "fight" in the Charter and in various speeches made in support of it seems to have frightened the South African Government—perhaps in South Africa it is not the political cliché which it is elsewhere.

Running through the whole of the prosecution's case is the suggestion of a Communist plot to overthrow the existing State. At the preliminary enquiry evidence was called to show that many of the speeches alleged to have been made by the accused and the documents found in their possession had a Communist slant. Evidence to the same effect is likely to be called at the trial itself. At the preliminary enquiry the evidence was given by Professor A. H. Murray, professor of philosophy at Cape Town University. Mr. Gerald Gardiner, Q.C., in the *Journal of the International Commission of Jurists*, August, 1957, summarised his evidence in chief as follows:

After an exposition of aims, doctrines and methods, he was asked to give his opinion on the "Communist content" of some of the documents seized from the accused. These he described variously as showing "Communist tendencies," "Marxist thinking," "Communist propaganda," "out-and-out Communism," and so on. Among the phraseology the professor picked out as Communist stock-in-trade were such words as "Fascist," "oppression," "people's democratic state" and "uncompromising democratic policy." The text of the Freedom Charter, Professor Murray said, showed little direct Communism; but when read together with the speeches which introduced it at the Congress of the people, it was clear that at least some sections were intended to be interpreted in Communist terms.

Professor Murray was vigorously challenged in cross-examination on behalf of the defendants. The prosecution were probably shaken by this cross-examination and as a precaution it had available in August 1958 as an additional witness a Dominican philosopher from the University of Fribourg.

There is one aspect of this trial which does seem to show unfairness. As already stated the original indictment alleged a conspiracy between the defendants and 152 named persons. Some of these named persons had been arrested in December 1956 but discharged from the case at an early stage. Some had never been arrested at all. Amongst those named as co-conspirators was

Chief A. J. Luthuli, the Christian President-General of the African National Congress: he had been arrested in 1956 and later discharged. In September 1958 at the Old Bailey in a case in which the prosecution had named in the indictment as a co-conspirator a man who had been discharged from the case at the magistrates' court, Mr. Justice Salmon ordered his name to be struck out of the indictment and described the practice of naming persons as co-conspirators without charging them as such as "grossly unfair and wholly wrong."

To those attuned to the present-day even tenor of political life in Western Europe and the United States, the conception of a plot such as the prosecution alleges may seem unreal, a nightmare. The Union Government has been accused of bad faith in bringing these charges of treason, the argument being that no one could have any honest belief in them. The accusation may be well founded, but it is as well to remember that what may seem far-fetched in Pudsey or South Bend in the year 1959 may not seem so far-fetched to an Afrikaner farmer, sitting on his stoep looking at the spot where his grandparents, or if he is old, maybe his own parents, were foully tortured and murdered during the Zulu wars. The living memory of the elderly will bear upon the interpretation of the evidence.

Many of those who are anxious to see the establishment of happy race relations in Africa and the African peoples firmly and securely settled within the fold of Christendom despair of this trial. They should not do so. The accused are represented by a team of highly skilled advocates—Mr. I. A. Maisels, Q.C., the leader of them, is one of the most experienced advocates in South Africa. So far the Court has shown a marked desire to do justice. The judges are steeped in the traditions of the Rule of Law. Justice should prevail.

A SHONA ECLOGUE

By
CHRISTOPHER DEVLIN

SHONA or Chi-Shona is the language of the people of Southern Rhodesia known as Ma-Shona. They did not bestow the name on themselves; it seems to be a variant of *Maswina*, a term of contempt ("sweepings," or something like that) given them by their Matebele overlords in the last century. Nor did the Mashona win a much more favourable estimate from Rhodes's "Pioneers," who succeeded the Matebele in 1891. They have not commanded any retrospective sympathy like the gay Basuto horsemen, the warrior Zulu or the tragic Anagoni; nor are they politically vocal like their neighbours of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

They have, however, quite an interesting if somewhat shadowy background. The Bantu peoples began journeying south from the Nile Valley perhaps about the seventh century A.D. at the time of Arab pressure on the black Christian kingdoms of Nubia and Ethiopia; about a century later the first *Zimbabwe*, the great stone palaces of Mashona-land, were built by a Bantu people possibly influenced by Egypt or Abyssinia; no other part of Tropical Africa has anything to compare with them. The builders were not the present Mashona who crossed the Zambezi about the thirteenth century in groups bearing the names which they still bear, VaKaranga, VaManyika and others; but there may well have been some continuity, for the later inferior *Zimbabwe* were probably the work of VaManyika and VaKaranga. In the sixteenth century Portuguese traders and missionaries found these people speaking the same language as today, organised in a loose feudal federation, but as backward as any other Bantu people in agriculture and building. Their Chiefs lived in huts within the stone circles of the *Zimbabwe*—in this respect more like the Celtic residue than the Saxon invaders of Roman Britain.

Christianity, brought by Fr. Silveira, who was martyred in 1561 at the instigation of Moslem traders, took a fairly firm hold

in the next century and a half; sons of Chiefs were sent abroad to be trained as priests. For the second time a Bantu people seemed on the verge of civilisation. But the Portuguese were strained beyond their capacity. About 1700 a tremendous Bantu irruption swept the country, travelling south from Tanganyika. White and black men were besieged and slaughtered together in their stone forts and churches. The Portuguese disappeared and with them, to all intents, Christianity. One tribe, "The Destroyers," remained as overlords; the Karanga and Manyika Chiefs were reduced to vassalage. But 120 years later another wave of "Destroyers" came, the Shangani, travelling from south to north this time, displaced by Chaka's wars. The first "Destroyers" were completely crushed. But Mutasa, Chief of the Manyika, and his neighbours Makoni and Mangwende, put up a stout resistance from their stone-crowned hill-tops. They also preserved a tradition of resistance to the third and most formidable nation of "Destroyers," the Matebele of Msilikazi and his son Lobengula. The Mutasa of the day made a free contract with Rhodes's Pioneers independently of Lobengula.

So it is not altogether surprising that from this people should have come forth a poem in traditional drum-beat rhythm which conveys a deep, fresh love of the land as authentically Bantu as its first word, "Chinyamatimbi"—the name of the village that is being praised:

Chinyamatimbi!

Chinyamatimbi musha une mbiri,
 Musha wakanaka kupinda yose,
 Une upfuto mumatura
 Nesimba mumaoko evanhu.
 Chinyamatimbi musha unokosha,
 Musha usingakanganikwi.

Chinyamatimbi! Chinyamatimbi is a village of renown, a village fairer than all others, it has riches in its granaries and strength in the arms of its people. Chinyamatimbi is a village held dear, a village not to be forgotten.¹

I have quoted the original to give the sound of the language. All further quotations will be from Mrs. Carter's translation, which, besides being always lucid and readable, is also strictly

¹ *Soko Risina Musoro* by H. W. Chitepo, translated and edited by Hazel Carter (Oxford University Press 12s 6d).

faithful, as her valuable notes and vocabulary testify. Any obscurities which arise are those that inevitably encounter a European trying to understand the African mind. The author, Mr. H. W. Chitepo, is indeed very well versed in European ways of thought; educated at the well-known Anglican mission of St. Faith's, Rusape, he studied law in London and is now a practising barrister in the capital of Southern Rhodesia where he is much in demand. Of more importance in the present context, however, is that Mr. Chitepo is a poet.

His work is quite spontaneous. It bears no trace of the self-conscious confusion that would come from trying to blend two incompatible cultures. If he has used his English training he has not done so to inflate a language that is still essentially pastoral and peasant, but to select and purify existing material. It is native work all through: concrete, vivid, flexible—in short "current speech heightened."

The first canto, a short one of 82 lines, is a series of little pictures of village life seen through the eyes of a small boy:

The house of Mai Mugari, chief wife of the stronghold of Chin-yamatimbi, was a house of very great joy. All we children used to gather there, singing stories and playing riddles, while the pumpkins cooked on the hearth and we ate our peas with smiles. . . . All strangers who came to the stronghold were treated as children of the home. The Sena who had lost his way was given a place to sleep without asking. The European out hunting had a mat brought out and given to him.

This woman was a wonderful person, her heart was full of kindness, as befits the heart of the Queen, the nurse of the family of the Heavenly One, lord of the boundless earth.

The small boy is the same as all other African small boys and their fathers before them for hundreds of years. He neglects the cattle and then runs to his grandmother for protection; he makes his private paths through the bush and shivers at the presence of the ancestors buried in the hills.

During my turn at herding I spent my time spinning peas and let the cattle eat the mealies of Mai Munyara, and in the evening I was refused food and ran to the grandmother, and she received me as if I had done no wrong.

All the gullies and passes of the mountains, I knew them all as friends. I knew all the trees of the forest. I knew all the fruits of the

veld. The path of the hare and the track of the kudu, I knew them as their friends.

The Mount of Mubvuwiri with graves on its summit, the Hill of the Crocodile with caves in its side, I knew them all, for I came from within them.

I saw the rain-sacrifices brewed, the pots of beer carried up the mountain, and the rain fell. The God of the earth brought forth the life of the crops.

The Shona Deity, *Mwari* or *Nyadenga* (the Heavenly One), has to be approached through the ritual of ancestor-worship, but effectively he is conceived in the same way as the God of whom St. Paul spoke to the Lycaonians: ". . . He has not left us without some proof of what he is; it is his bounty that grants us rain from heaven, and the seasons which give birth to our crops, so that we have nourishment and comfort to our heart's desire." Thus of the woman who is sowing her vegetables by the river side the poet writes—

Her hands were filled with mud, but she knew that in the earth she held she was joining with the Heavenly One in the task of raising the crops which give life.

In the second canto, of 150 lines, the scene lengthens both in time and place. Springtime is changing to summer, but there is a growing apprehension that the rains are not coming.

Outside it was dry. The sun burnt like fire. I stood on the Hill of the King and gazed at the roads leading to the royal court. In the midst of the way two men met together.

One of them is known as The Wanderer: ". . . my home is the roads and mountains, my kindred the beasts of the night and the birds that cry in the dawning." Associations with a romantic stranger in one of Synge's plays are out of place here. The birds that cry most insistently in the dawning are the witch-birds, a kind of sandpiper with a very hideous scream; a wanderer without a home is, for the African, a sinister figure.

The other is the Councillor, a personage of the King's court. A kindly and dignified old gentleman, he is more startled to learn that the Wanderer has no home than the Wanderer is to see that the Councillor has no flesh and blood: he is a spirit.

All that remains of my people is their spirits. This procession is

one of people who were once my people. Now they go to the place of sacrifice where the drum resounds.

The English reader might think he has strayed into another sort of Problem Play in which the audience is not sure which characters are dead or alive. But in African folklore, or folklore in general, such a situation is not specially problematical. For many more centuries than we have become used to thinking of men as independent individuals with three-dimensional bodies, the African has been used to thinking of them as "The People," a unit in which life and death make no essential difference. In fact the dead may be the leaders of the living, as the Councillor says when the Wanderer asks him what is happening at the place of sacrifice.

Every year we used to gather there, we the creatures of earth and they, the elders who led the way over the river in between, which divides the creator from his creatures.

I do not know whether African ideas of death can be reduced to rational terms. But what emerges from this poem is that, while a man's transient life departs with his breath and with the shadow no longer cast by his dead body, there is still a permanent life which links him with the whole community. From that point of view it does not matter very much whether the Councillor is dead or alive so long as he is—literally—rooted in the past. It is the Wanderer who is in the really shocking state, deprived of a home both in this world and the next. The Councillor speaks kindly to him, but he cannot understand his plea that his home is now the whole world and his kindred *all* creatures.

The Councillor's place is taken by a third figure who comes from the opposite direction "laughing as he travels while all others are mourning." This is the *Nhawatawa*, a word which can mean both "a simpleton" and "a rogue." The ambiguity is perhaps intentional, for the *Nhawatawa* seems designated to be the "Tsotsi" of the future on his way to the Salisbury of the future; hardboiled and gullible, both parasite and prey of the industrial civilisation that sucks him in. He answers the Wanderer's cold questioning with leering impertinence; later with sulky sincerity gives his reason for deserting his people:

What does it profit to go and bury oneself? I am poor but I do not dig myself a grave. They are not men who are going thither,

they are fleshless bones, bodiless spirits. I like not the smell of the pot where meat was cooked last year. . . . I am going, grandfather, I have come from the place where they are going.

And the Wanderer cannot forbear to praise him as he goes on his way, like Autolycus in *The Winter's Tale*, with a merry heart.

Very well, grandson, go on to your destination. You are courageous and wise, you laugh, carrying your burden as you go. And I, too, carry my burden, I have become sick at heart going whither I go, that is how things stand.

The Wanderer is thus delineated in the present dilemma of his people: between the ancestral past and the industrial future. It is not a new dilemma; it has been well worked over in various recent novels and treatises. But here it is simply accepted as a background against which the casual, mime-like figures of the poem stand out with clarity. Clarity too is shed on the Wanderer's words and feelings; he is the poet himself—as poet, not as individual—whose burden it is to be a mediator in the dilemma. Already the reader's mind is being shaped for the Wanderer's fine and final lines in the third and last canto:

Isu mapofu evafambi,
Mapofu ngatifambe,
Ngatifambe nekuzvirereka
Murima riri mberi kwatinoenda,
Rima riri shure kwatakabva,
Mwari chete ndiye ruveneko.

We blind wanderers, as blind men let us walk, let us walk and be humble in the darkness which is before us whither we go, the darkness which is behind us whence we have come. God alone is the light.

The third and last canto, by far the longest (375 lines), tells of the Council at King Mutasa's court. The terrible increasing dryness and the people's fears are described in the patient and lively manner which characterises this poem. The drought is only a symptom of the complete exhaustion of ancestral power in a crisis which has no parallel in the past. The King and his Councillors bear historical names, but they range over the whole past up to about 1875—when the Grab for Africa was in

preparation. This canto is the most impressive in its depth of thought and feeling, but for English readers it is perhaps the least satisfying because, I think, of the oblique, inconsequential nature of Bantu discussion. Speech follows speech, now swelling to a pitch of hysteria—

The sun of the kingship is setting, the rising wind is screaming a tale of death. The rivers have dried up, leaving only pools filled with the corpses of the dead. . . .

Where is God the creator? The water has dried up in the rivers, the fields are bare as deserts, even the wild fruits die in the belly of the earth. . . .

—now dying away to a soothing mutter:

His heaven is round, it has no limits. His spirit blows gently, blows strongly, going whither it goes, coming whence we know not.

The weary old King, who has been threatened with ritual execution, makes his last reply. He is one with his people; if one fails, both fail and the failure is that of the ancestors behind them; if there is any hope in this crisis, it can only be from God, "the first ancestor." The silent people are left with a series of whispered questions—"Where is it gone, the courage I thought was mine?" —which can only be answered by other questions: "Yours? Where did you get it, poor receiver?" The Wanderer, who has been sitting apart, then utters the last speech which closes the poem.

At first sight the Wanderer's words about darkness and God seem to add little to the King's, except that the Wanderer's God is of the whole world, not only of one people. I am left with the impression that the Wanderer has found conviction in a world-religion but no comfort. The conviction seems to come from the *inevitability* of a world-religion, and this is indeed cold comfort; for "*inevitability*" is not one of the marks of Christianity, whereas it is the mark claimed by the Communist world-state. There is, however, one part of the Wanderer's speech which stands out clearly from the rest:

Let us sing and be mindful of our gifts. A fair land with mountains which shine and shimmer in the haze; rivers which run down dancing to the place whence they came; fields which lie bare and silent in the spring and are dark with crops in the summer; and

the plains filled with countless trees, many-coloured with flowers and leaves. Let us dance, we who are blessed, we have powerful bodies with mighty bones. Let us thank God, let us praise him, for he, he is the giver of life and the receiver of gifts.

Most of the Bantu peoples, like many others, have the notion of a "land seen in dreams" which will be the end of their journeying. In this passage, the finest in the poem, the Bantu landscape is presented at its most attractive, attractive not only for its promise of a solid livelihood, but for its hints of a heavenly permanence. My impression is that this passage ties up with the opening canto with its sacramental echoes in praise of Chinyamatimbi.

Ancestor worship belongs properly to warrior peoples who rise and fall; it collapses after conquest and long subjection. Below it, bound up with reverence for the earth, is a deeper reservoir of natural religion which can sustain a peasant people. It is a powerful community sense, common sense if you like, which upholds them when their individual constructions have broken down in despair. It may take shape evilly, indifferently or graciously; evilly as the stuff of witch-craft; indifferently in telepathy; graciously as the *anima humana naturaliter christiana*. As the need of a people for the fullness of doctrinal Christianity: the Trinity, the Mass, the Sacraments, the Communion of Saints: the fullness of God's Charity to mankind.

There is no need to theorise, for the thing is actually happening. The Creator Spirit is at work. Although the Africans may still be failing in overwhelming numbers as individuals, yet *already* the Charity of God has moved in to take over the soul of the people: a sort of "inevitability."

For the student of Bantu languages and ethnology this poem probably contains much of interest. For the missionary, I think, it illuminates the drama that is being enacted almost visibly under his eyes: the Charity of God is moving in to take over the void left by ancestor worship: leaving still of course innumerable problems, moral and political, only to be solved by endless patience. In *Caritate Dei et Patientia Christi*, as the Breviary says: in the Charity of God and the Patience of Christ.

TOWARDS A NEW APOLOGETIC¹

By
R. A. KNOX

OUR YOUNG MEN see visions. They get hold of an idea—or should we say, an idea gets hold of them?—which gives them the clue, as they think, to the riddle of life; let them persuade mankind to adopt this particular enthusiasm of theirs, and all will be well. No matter whether it be a religious, a political, or a cultural ideal, it is paramount in their minds; their way of thinking alone explains the past, alone gives hope for the future. And, just as a man who imagines, too soon, that he has got the right clue to a cipher message will interpret the message by that clue, at the risk of turning it into nonsense; will insist that the meaning *must* be this or that, however fantastic it appears; will wrest the sense of it in the effort to make it correspond with a formula—so the youthful crusader will sweep aside all the facts which seem to tell against his darling thesis, will accept without flinching the most inconvenient corollaries, sooner than mar the perfect unity of his accepted truth. If it is to retain its spell over him, it must at all costs be coherent; he is less concerned to discover whether it corresponds with the facts of the world outside. There shall be no saving clauses, no soft-pedalling, no suggestion of meeting the adversary half-way. Rather, if anything, he will underline all the points of disagreement;

¹ In 1956 Ronald Knox began to write what he hoped would be a large work of apologetics. He was undecided whether it should take the form of direct disquisition or dialogue. He was always attracted by the latter method. He realised that the fiction of Mallock's *New Republic*—a house-party of pundits—did not correspond with contemporary social conditions. He therefore chose the "brains-trust" as the modern equivalent. This introductory chapter would have stood as written in either version. He wrote the second chapter in both forms, showed them to certain friends and solicited their opinions. It seems probable that he would have abandoned the dialogue form. In the autumn of 1956 he put the work aside in order to translate St. Thérèse's *Autobiography*. He did not live to resume it.—EVELYN WAUGH.

a set of defiant paradoxes shall make it clear that the drawbridge is up, and there is no hope of parley. He tells himself that he will show these fellows exactly where they get off.

The instinct of old age, for better or worse, is quite different. Old men, to be sure, will often be explosively certain about their own opinions. They have spent a lifetime in controversy, and it irks them to find the world still acquiescing in notions which they have repeatedly disproved. Or they have been immersed in practical activities; now, on the retired list, they have returned to the habit of reading, and are angry with the new generation for not worshipping at the shrines of their youth. But, let a man keep his ears open, and allow other people to do the talking; let him acquire the habit of putting himself in the other fellow's place and imagining what it would be like to be like that; let him resolve, whenever he writes or speaks in public, to give an honest account of his own personal attitude, not using borrowed phrases or second-hand opinions, and he will find, before he is seventy, that the years have mellowed him. He has not changed his own point of view, but he has begun to understand the other man's; to recognise it as at least plausible, perhaps conveying a half-truth. The world is no longer divided into angels who agree and devils who disagree with him. His opinions do not stand out in flaming contrast against a background of contemporary thought; they harmonise a little with its pattern. Experience has softened the hard edges of his affirmations. If I may use words in a grossly unphilosophical sense, what he demands now is not so much truth as reality.

This is an old man's book. Its subject is the Christian revelation; that series of confident assertions about a supernatural world interpenetrating our own, which is still believed and disbelieved as noisily as when it first leaked out from the Catacombs. Revelation comes, *ex hypothesi*, from God; its assertions, therefore, cannot themselves be checked or verified by any reference to that experimental knowledge which we have of the world about us; they belong to a different order. If you live to be ninety, the doctrine of the Trinity is no more provable or probable to you than it was when you were nineteen. But revelation comes from God to Man; it must, therefore, be presented to Man in his own language, in terms of his own thinking. He must be convinced, somehow, that its statements are acceptable, that its warnings and

promises are applicable, to him. Religion, except in its crudest form, has to make room for apologetics, not merely for doctrinal theology; a rough estimate of history, a rudimentary process of inference, are demanded of the simplest mind before it can say "I believe." Thus the presentation of the divine fact to the human mind calls for persuasion; and if you would persuade, you must have some knowledge of how people's minds work, of the ideals which move them and the prejudices which enchain them. Experience is no longer to be despised, and even an old man's book may be worth the writing.

This book is not a defence of the Christian religion, such as Pascal dreamed of. I do not know that it would be possible, in these times, to attempt such an undertaking. Natural science has ramified prodigiously, and has thrown out bastard shoots; history fades into pre-history; the natural law is discredited, and philosophy has abdicated its responsibilities. To vindicate the claims of the supernatural in a world so unfriendly to the very thought of it would demand encyclopaedic culture, scarcely to be united in any single mind—and who ever reads a symposium? Nevertheless, in the hope that such an adventurer may arise, in times not remote from the present, I have tried here, within very limited terms of reference, to blaze the trail for him. Everything I have written in this book is only an adumbration of the book I should like to see written.

Reviewers are busy men, and I wish it were possible to inform them, in a few sentences, what my book is "about." But it is hardly more than a set of detached considerations; and if they must be hung on a thread, it will have to take the ungracious form of a criticism. I think that our Catholic apologetic, nearly all of it, strikes the modern reader as inhuman. Just because it is worked out with such mathematical precision, just because a suitable answer comes pat to every question, just because it always seems to face you with a dilemma from which there is no logical escape, it afflicts our contemporaries with a sense of *malaise*. I do not know how to explain this extraordinary state of things to the scandalised seminary professor. It is a question of atmospheres. There is a character in one of Maurice Baring's novels, *Passing By*, who complains of this methodical tendency. "I said Roman Catholics were always so matter-of-fact. They handed one opinions and ideas like chocolates wrapped up in

silver paper." The phrase was, I suspect, an echo from real life. "But why shouldn't chocolates be wrapped in silver paper?" asks the bewildered theologian. "And why shouldn't perplexities be resolved by a time-honoured formula from the Catechism?" I know; it is all utterly preposterous; they ask us for a plain answer to a plain question, and then object to our plain answer because it is not a coloured one. But there it is; our answers seem too glib, too "slick"; there is something machine-made about them. They are clothed with an appearance of truth, but—if I may go back to my unphilosophical phrase—they do not smell of reality.

No, we are not to blame. For one thing, when the Dark Ages came to an end, and the Church had leisure to collect her thoughts, Aristotle lay ready to hand; and Aristotle, of all the ancient writers, is the most prosaic and the most methodical. Nothing could rank as true grain which had not passed through the fine sieve of the syllogism. The system of formal scholastic disputation is, to be sure, one of the most delicate instruments in the world; so little antiquated that you may hear it today on the wireless. But—is it only the fault of the wireless that the whole performance sounds, somehow, incorporeal, as if two angels were discussing imaginary doubts? It has the skill, but also the unreality, of a fencing-match. In the Middle Ages, when it took its present form, you dealt with the Mohammedan enemy by force of arms; the insignificant fifth column of Catharism, you persecuted. There was no real clash of swords with a determined opponent; it was all decorous skirmishing within the precincts of the Schools. The method thus perfected was that of giving a cut-and-dried answer to a cut-and-dried question. It made no allowance for the imponderables of human psychology. Years ago, a friend of mine who was studying for the priesthood was going through a bad time spiritually, and his malady took the form of "temptations against the faith." He sought out a priest who was well known as the most skilful director of consciences in Rome, and tried to explain himself. Arguments? No, he had no *arguments*, exactly. So he was dismissed with the formula, *Argumenta non habes; ergo non dubitas.*

When the Reformation theology broke over Europe, with its new heritage of scruples and despairs, it might have been expected that our apologetics would have become less inhuman,

less impersonal, addressed rather to the conscience than to the speculative intellect. But all such hopes were falsified by the event. The Reformers, conscious of their need for a rule of faith, appealed to Scripture as the unique repository of divine truth. Necessarily, therefore, to the literal meaning of Scripture, divorced from any traditional interpretation—tradition was a weapon which might turn in their hands. Hence the extreme literalism of our early versions, produced as they were in the golden age of free translation. Hence the pettifogging appeal to isolated Scriptural phrases, torn from their context, which dominated religious controversy for three centuries. Once again, it was not our fault; the Reformers had forced upon us their own choice of weapons. But the effect was to dehumanise, worse than before, the character of our polemic. Already, by inheritance from the days when we were in controversy with a literalist Judaism, we had grown accustomed to the idea of "quoting texts"—that is, of basing a whole edifice of argument on the "plain" meaning of a single sentence. A process legitimate enough, though history has shown that it is a double-edged weapon. But once more, it introduces a certain aridity into our methods of proof. The texts are all right, but they come to us wrapped up in silver paper.

When we refer to the eighteenth century as the Age of Reason, we pay it something of a back-handed compliment. Reason is all very well, but it must be kept in its place; like fire, it is a good servant but a bad master. We prefer to keep it behind the green-baize door; do not the scientists assure us that it is only a utility product? On the whole, we are an age of unreason. I do not mean simply that our prophets, nowadays are the literary critics, the art critics, the popular historians, rather than what an older generation used to call "thinkers." I do not mean simply that most of our poets have abandoned the direct communication of ideas for a subtle suggestiveness of association. I am thinking rather of the misgivings which lurk in our own minds; psychology has pried so deeply into the stuff out of which (they tell us) our ideas are made that we have come to distrust their value. We shrink from adopting any opinion (except such as are dictated to us by the crowd), for fear that our own judgment should be playing us false, a warped yard-stick. Not ours to be logical overmuch; logic is a current which may sweep you

off your feet unawares. As for metaphysics, philosophy itself has abandoned them . . . Sir Arnold Lunn, who has a good nose for heresy, has pilloried this mood of our age a quarter of a century back. He was still in his pre-Catholic stage when he wrote *The Flight from Reason*, expecting angry disclaimers from every side. And the public reaction, on the whole, was "Why not?"

But it is only within recent years that this mood has hardened into a philosophy. In France, Existentialism has threatened, by a kind of palace revolution, to dethrone the intellect; with the characteristic result that we cannot be quite sure whether we ought all to be Catholics, or all to be atheists. The German Lutherans, who seemed, only yesterday, to have sold the pass to rationalism, are relapsing into a Pietism far more in accordance with their traditions. And in England itself we hear of strange tendencies in the younger generation. University authorities write to the papers deplored the rigid orthodoxy of the modern undergraduate; educationalists shake their heads over boys and girls who come up from the grammar schools with their minds closed, not against religion, but against unbelief. It is pure Erewhon. The solemn doubts of the Victorians have not been met with any weapons of controversy; have not been countered and put in their place. They are simply written off as bad form.

It may be this is only a passing phase. Old age brings its penalty of disillusionment, especially when the younger generation occupies your thoughts. I cannot remember any decade, these last fifty years, in which we were not assured that religion was returning; and it has never returned. But, whatever be the truth about this revival of fundamentalism, it remains permanently true that your Englishman has no turn for theology. He is still capable of swapping texts with you; he likes to have "chapter and verse." But the moment you try to interpret, or to infer, he is not slow to accuse you of "quibbling." Nor has he, in the strict sense, a love of truth. On the negative side, he hates a lie; he has a horror of believing falsely. But Truth is not the thing he expects to "get" out of religion. Witness the phrases which enshrine, traditionally, the first experience of contact with the unseen. You have got right with God, you have found the Saviour, you have found peace, you have been saved, your life has been changed. To have found the truth has never, so far as

I know, been a catchword of this kind. Truth is a means to an end, for the common man; the idea that thinking in a certain way can be a duty incumbent on the human mind is altogether strange to him.

Am I suggesting that we should haul down the flag of intellectualism? That we should appear in the eyes of our fellow-countrymen simply as one of the denominations, canonised by the antiquity of our institutions and the richness of our culture, but not laying claim, or not manifestly asserting our claim, to possess a more closely reasoned intellectual system than the others? If such a gesture were possible, I should be the last to recommend it. "An unintellectual salvation" (the phrase, I think, was Philip Waggett's) "means an unsaved intellect"; and if muddle-headedness is a mood of our age, and a vice of our fellow-countrymen, we, whose traditions are agelong and world-wide, are committed to an attitude of protest. Even for the sake of Christianity at large, we dare not betray, by silence, what is part of our characteristic witness. No, intellectual propaganda we must have. I only question whether we do not spoil the effect of our intellectual protest by isolating it too much—serving it up, as it were, under a separate cover—from that moral and spiritual witness which, as Christians, we do not cease to bear.

"To know God Christian-wise, you have to recognise at the same time your own wretchedness, your own unworthiness, your own need of a Mediator if you are to draw near God and be united to him. These two convictions must on no account be kept separate; either without the other is not only useless, but positively harmful." So wrote Pascal; being Pascal, he was too absolute about it, too Augustinian. But his imaginary picture of the philosopher who, having proved the existence of God to his own satisfaction, is thereby betrayed into the sin of pride, provokes thought. Did any human being ever arrive at this momentous conclusion in a spirit of pure research, without any index of his moral sympathies being engaged from first to last? And, if not, must there not be something slightly inhuman about the textbook treatment which hands out the doctrine of God's existence as if it were an investigation into the square root of minus one?

Of course, where it is a question of formal controversy, formalism is inevitable; in a set disputation with unbelievers,

you cannot risk the accusation of wish-thinking. But when you are making an effort, by speech or in print, to put the Catholic point of view acceptably, these honourable scruples may lose you an audience. I do not say that we Catholics exaggerate the duty of right thinking, but I wonder whether we do not isolate it too much from its moral context. How fond we are, for instance, of the word "instruction"! A recent convert, say, has made a wrong marriage; we fall back on the comment, "He must have been very badly instructed." As if nobody ever sinned except for want of information! Or do we, perhaps imply that the convert was taught what Christ's law is, but was not taught to love it? Again, in several dioceses there is a rule that the clergy must give a short "instruction" at each Mass. In practice, no doubt, my brethren improve the occasion; they do not confine themselves to a bare statement of facts. But the implication seems to be that doctrine is what matters. You will search long among the notice-boards of other denominations before you find an "instruction" advertised.

This, however, is a digression. What I am concerned with is our apologetics, and that great work of apologetic, some day to be written, which shall suggest to the reader that in approaching Christian theology he is approaching something that is alive, not a series of diagrams. The hardest part of the author's task, as I see it, will be to introduce some human element into natural theology; to prove that God is, and what God is, not merely with the effect of intellectual satisfaction, but with a glow of assent that springs from the whole being; "did not our hearts burn within us when he talked to us by the way?" But his task will not end here. He will vindicate the prophecies, not by raking up a score of familiar quotations, but by exhibiting the Old Testament *in extenso* as a cipher message imposed on history. He will prove the divineness of Our Lord's mission, not by presenting us with a series of logical dilemmas, but by trying to reconstruct the picture of Our Lord Himself, what it was that met the gaze of the Apostles, and the touch of their hands. He will read the New Testament, not as a set of "passages" which must somehow be reconciled with one another, but as the breathless confidences of living men, reacting to human situations, and inflamed with zeal for their Master. He will portray the teaching Church, not as a harassed official "handing

out" information at a series of press-conferences, but as a patient pioneer washing out the gold from the turbid stream of her own memories. Everything will come alive at his touch; he will not merely know what he is talking about, but feel what he is talking about.¹

Exoriare aliquis!

MR. BETJEMAN AS THINKER

By
CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

AMID THE CHORUS of well deserved praise for Mr. Betjeman's poems² the assertion has been frequently heard that he is not a thinker, and indeed Mr. Betjeman has himself given currency to this in a statement that he "can't think." There is perhaps a sense in which this is true. I doubt if Mr. Betjeman could set out with any especial lucidity a subheaded, rational, apologetic synopsis of the reasons for the details of his religious faith. He is passionately convinced of the validity of the Anglican sacraments. The theologian would argue that that validity depends on the validity of Anglican orders, that they in their turn depend on the substantiation of certain historical claims. I doubt if Mr. Betjeman could satisfy the examiners in a rigid historical inquiry into the meaning of the ordinals and what happened in the early years of Elizabeth. Nor do I think that he could answer with confidence some competent devil's advocate, casting doubt on the validity of the Thomist's proofs of the existence of God, or explain clearly why the evidence for the Resurrection was compulsive.

Yet the fact that there are many arguments which he would not think himself qualified to develop does not mean that the

¹ This and the subsequent chapters are the copyright of Mr. Evelyn Waugh.

² John Betjeman's *Collected Poems*, compiled with an Introduction by Lord Birkenhead (John Murray 15s).

arguments which he does develop are not perfectly reasonable, and it is the greatest of mistakes to overlook this because he says it all in a whimsical, humorous, informal way, mixing it up with a love of Gothic chancels and suburban trains and beefy female tennis-players.

It is common enough to notice Mt. Betjeman's opposition to concrete lamp-posts, to the demolition of churches and to other features of modern life and to dub him an amusing, if sometimes irresponsible, fighter of a rear-guard action against progress. But there is surely a much deeper point at issue in these antagonisms of his, a point which such criticisms singularly miss. Myself I happen to be in general sympathy with most of Mr. Betjeman's protests but I am not particularly concerned to deny that he may at times have been guilty of extravagance in detail, but whether that be so or not is not of great importance. If we want to see what is the real point of his protest take *Huxley Hall*.

In the Garden City Café with its murals on the wall
Before a talk on "Sex and Civics" I meditated on the Fall.
While outside the carefree children sported in the summer haze
And released their inhibitions in a hundred different ways.
Barry smashes Shirley's dolly, Shirley's eyes are crossed with
hate,
Comrades plot a Comrade's downfall "in the interests of the
State."

Not my vegetarian dinner, not my lime-juice minus gin,
Quite can drown a faint conviction that we may be born in Sin.

Now surely it is the height of superficiality if the only challenge to Tennyson that we can find in these lines is an assertion that old ways were more gracious than the new. Mr. Betjeman does doubtless think that, but it is only a most incidental and superficial point. The essential point upon which he never wavers is that of the utter futility of mere humanism, of an attempt to organise man apart from God. *Huxley Hall* is condemned because it is such an attempt. The promises of the politician to double our standard of living or of the sociologist to tidy up our lives may be fulfilled or they may not. Mr. Betjeman is not concerned to prophesy their failure. He is concerned to protest against the stupidity which thinks it of primary importance whether they succeed or not—which thinks that the conquest of

these problems can greatly matter so long as there remains unconquered the last enemy, who is Death.

The point about the Town Clerk in *The Town Clerk's Views*, is not that he was exceptionally wicked but simply that he was a thumping fool to think that the sort of reforms that he would introduce could possibly solve Man's problems or bring him happiness. It is the same with *The Planster's Vision*,

I have a Vision of The Future, chum,
 The workers' flats in fields of soya beans
 Tower up like silver pencils, score on score:
 And Surging Millions hear the Challenge come
 From microphones in communal canteens
 No Right! No Wrong! All's perfect, evermore.

The Planster, like the Town Clerk, is just a fool.

He who has religious faith is by no means secure. There remains the great enemy of lust. But lust is at least self-evidently an enemy. He who surrenders to it surrenders to it, knowing that he is surrendering to an attack.

Oh, whip the dogs away, my Lord,
 They make me ill with lust.
 Bend bare knees down to pray, my Lord,
 Teach sulky lips to say, my Lord,
 That flaxen hair is dust.

Even where the surrender is made to lust without struggle by a person without faith, it carries with it in satiety its own disillusion. It has about it something of the nature of those sins which St. Augustine tells us lead to the love of God. As the Night Club Proprietress discovers,

There was sun enough for lazing upon beaches,
 There was fun enough for far into the night.
 But I'm dying now and done for,
 What on earth was all the fun for?
 For I'm old and ill and terrified and tight.

But worldliness—the belief in the self-sufficiency of this world—the belief that this world by itself makes sense—that there is any sense in a life that is devoted to the chase after success as an end in itself—it is against this that Mr. Betjeman makes his constant and unwavering protest.

So his first position is that humanism is self-evident nonsense. Whatever is in, that is clearly out. Whatever is right, that is clearly wrong. "Glory to Man in the Highest" is clearly nonsense, and "Man is the master of Things" a lie so long as there remains the real Master, Death. It is perhaps not certain that Christianity is true. What is absolutely certain is that the alternatives to it are rubbish. The great reality is Death. It is Christianity alone which has anything to say to us about Death. What it has to say may be true or false, but nothing else has anything to say at all.

That is, I think, Mr. Betjeman's first position. Humanism is wrong, but there remains the question whether anything is right or whether humanism is not rubbish simply because reality is rubbish, and this explains Mr. Betjeman's obsession with Death, which is so often noted and sometimes deplored. I do not myself in the least complain of Mr. Betjeman's obsession. I do not think that anyone over middle age ever for long thinks about anything except Death, though some people have a dislike, which I personally find boring and unhealthy, for talking about it. Whenever I meet Mr. Betjeman we never dream of talking about anything except Death, and I find such conversation natural. There remains the second and somewhat different complaint, which has sometimes been made, that his fear of Death seems strangely unillumined by Christian confidence. Is he too frightened of Death? It is perfectly true that he does at times state the case for annihilation in fearful frankness. I do not myself find this either shocking or surprising. The case for and the case against annihilation have been debated since the beginning of time. On their own unaided merits they are pretty evenly balanced, and neither those who express complete confidence in survival or complete confidence in annihilation are really telling the truth. It is only if we can accept the Christian evidence that we have full assurance of survival, and even then faith is not a sort of patent antidote which at once destroys the whole force of the sceptical argument. Rather, if we may judge from the awful words upon the Cross, faith is not fully faith until it has bravely faced the strength of the sceptical argument. So surely we should applaud Mr. Betjeman's unqualified understanding that all stands or falls with the full doctrine of the Incarnation—his contemptuous rejection of the half-faiths which attempt to have the best of

both worlds and only succeed in getting the best of neither. Nothing else has value as against the Incarnation. Everything else only derives its value from the Incarnation.

And is it true? And is it true,
 This most tremendous tale of all,
 Seen in a stained-glass window's hue,
 A Baby in an ox's stall?
 The Maker of the stars and sea
 Become a Child on earth for me?

And is it true? For if it is,
 No loving fingers tying strings
 Around those tissue'd fripperies,
 The sweet and silly Christmas things,
 Bath salts and inexpensive scent
 And hideous tie so kindly meant,

No love that in a family dwells,
 No carolling in frosty air,
 Nor all the steeple-shaking bells
 Can with this single Truth compare—
 That God was Man in Palestine
 And lives to-day in Bread and Wine.

Could anything be better than that? and, above all, could there be clearer thinking?

1859-1959

By

SIR JOHN McEWEN

THREE is nothing sacred about a centenary. It is merely the lapse of a purely arbitrary space of time. And it happens, moreover, every year. But in this case I maintain that we are especially justified in showing an interest in the present year's centenary, for if even half the number of important events

happen in 1859 as happened in 1859 it will be a remarkable year indeed. Mr. Douglas Woodruff has called it "that fateful year"; and fateful it was, marking the end of an old world and the earliest beginning of the world we know. As to the beginning, Wilhelm II, later German Emperor, was born in January, while in November the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, came of age. On the other hand, Frederick II of Naples, an eighteenth-century figure if ever there was one, died at Caserta in May, and was followed less than a month later to the grave by Prince Metternich. But these were not the only signs of the close of an epoch. On 6 May, Charles Greville resigned from the Clerkship of the Privy Council and the last volume of the great diary was put on the shelf; Vauxhall Gardens were closed, and seven years after the Duke's own death, and forty-four after Waterloo, honour was paid to one of the most famous of his subordinate commanders, Sir Thomas Picton, who had fallen in the battle. His remains were exhumed from the Bayswater Road cemetery and re-interred with military honours in St. Paul's. One saint died, the Curé d'Ars, also Washington Irving, Disraeli's beloved only sister, Sarah, David Cox, the painter, and, in the last week of the year, Macaulay. The death of yet another distinguished man, Dr. Henry Weedall, President of Oscott, remains memorable for what was spoken in his praise by an even greater. For it was at Weedall's funeral that Newman preached the sermon known as "The Tree beside the Waters." It was likewise in the course of this year that Newman founded the Oratory School. At Cambridge, for reasons which escape me, Clare sold its college plate; while on 26 April, at St. Michael's, Oxford, William Morris and Jane Burden were married. It may be added that in the first named University Henry Sidgwick was elected to a fellowship at Trinity.

In June Napoleon III was telegraphing back to Paris from northern Italy, "*Grande bataille, grande victoire.*" After a campaign, the planning of which had "ignored completely the unauthorised innovation of railways, and depended for its success upon the obliging courtesy of an enemy who would keep reasonably still," the Emperor had defeated his Austrian opponents in two pitched and unnecessarily murderous battles, Magenta and Solferino, on 4 and 24 June. At the same time in near-by Parma, Duchess Louise, the Regent, a daughter of the Royal House of France,

was forced by a rascally mob to seek refuge in Switzerland. In July the war ended (somewhat precipitately owing to ominous German movements behind the Rhine) and an armistice was signed at Villafranca, while in Germany a young officer called Hindenburg was entering a military academy, "preparing for the only education he was ever to know or seek." Further afield, on the Pacific seaboard, an American force quietly occupied the island of San Juan on the boundary of Oregon and British Columbia which had been a matter of dispute between the American Government and Great Britain for the past thirteen years. In the Deep South one D. D. Emmett published a song in praise of New Orleans called *Dixie*, which within another two years was to become the favourite battle-song of the Confederacy in the Civil War, when the name developed into a general designation of the entire South. Before leaving the New World it falls to be noted that Blondin first crossed Niagara by tight-rope that summer, and that by December the ill-fated Archduke Maximilian of Austria was in Madeira on his way to Mexico and disaster. Whether it is worthwhile mentioning that Great Britain and Guatemala signed a Boundary Convention that year I am not sure, but so it was. In Australia, Queensland became a Colony and took in the territory of North Australia; and the singer, Melba (according to some authorities) was born. And talking of music, a French Commission, called upon to regulate a state of affairs which was threatening to get out of hand, since, in order to get increasingly brilliant effects from the orchestra, the pitch was being forced ever higher and higher, fixed the standard pitch at 435 vibrations. This is called the normal diapason and is still in general use, if not everywhere, at any rate on the Continent of Europe. In London the start of the Popular Concerts made it possible for the first time for the ordinary musical student to become acquainted with the classics of chamber music.

But it is when one regards 1859 from the literary standpoint that one begins to realise how remarkable a year it was. For not to mention Darwin and his *Origin of Species*, it fathered also *Adam Bede*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Richard Feverel*, *Idylls of the King*, *The Mill on the Floss*, the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyám and Baudelaire's finest poem, *Le Voyage*. It also saw the birth of Francis Thompson and of A. E. Housman, of Eleonora Duse, of Albert Samain, Jerome K. Jerome, Conan Doyle, Jean Jaurés, Havelock Ellis and

Knut Hamsun. After that it remains only to record such lesser events as the completion and first opening to the public of the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh; the opening of Isambard Brunel's great bridge across the river Tamar at Saltash; the discovery by Livingstone, on 16 September, of Lake Nyasa; the recovery of the *Lutine* bell, now at Lloyd's; the finding of the Codex Sinaiticus by Tischendorf in St. Catherine's Monastery on Mount Sinai; the setting up and first striking of Big Ben at Westminster; the removal from the Anglican Prayer-Book of the Service commemorating King Charles the Martyr; permission given to Catholics to go to Oxford and Cambridge; the foundation by St. John Bosco of Society of St. Francis of Sales in Turin; the starting by Sir Edward Walter of the Corps of Commissionaires in London; the first dog-show on record held in Newcastle, and lastly, and nostalgically, according to the author of a book called *A History of the Birds of Middlesex*, it was just a hundred years ago that the last kite was seen flying over Piccadilly.

ST. BONAVENTURE

By

ANSELMA BRENNELL¹

ST. BONAVENTURE, called by Pope Leo XIII "the Prince of Mystics," may be described as a contemplative in action: a mystic, indeed, but one whose feet were firmly planted upon the ground: one who, favoured with the highest contemplative graces, was able to govern a great religious Order, defend it against enemies within and without, see it through a crisis which threatened to destroy it, and go down to history as its second founder and greatest glory after Francis himself.

It is tantalising that no contemporary biography exists and modern research has rejected much of what was once accepted,

¹ The writer is a Benedictine of Stanbrook Abbey.

whilst considerable discrepancy in important dates adds further difficulties for the biographer.

He was born at Bagnorea, near Viterbo, the son of John of Fidanza and Maria Ritella, and although baptised "John" and also known as "of Fidanza," seems from an early age to have been called "Bonaventure," why we do not know. There are grounds for thinking that his father was a physician, and, however that may be, we are told that both parents were of good family, well to do, and devoutly religious.

In the Prologue to his Life of St. Francis, Bonaventure tells us how when a child he fell dangerously ill, so that parents and doctors despaired of him, whereupon his mother dedicated him to the *Poverello*, imploring the latter to cure him. To the general astonishment, the child recovered to remain thenceforward strong and healthy. "In childhood," he writes, "through his (Francis's) intercession and merits, I was rescued from the jaws of death. . . and did I fail to proclaim his praise I should fear to be reproached for the sin of ingratitude."

The knowledge of his mother's vow begot in the boy an intense devotion to Francis which strengthened with the years. Francis is his ideal, in whom he sees the highest state of prayer fully realised, and one of his leading works, the *Itinerarium mentis ad Deum*—the Way whereby the soul returns to God from whom it has departed through original sin, was composed when Bonaventure was in retreat at Mount Alverno.

In either 1238 or 1243, he entered the Friars Minor and, apart from gratitude to St. Francis, he tells us that the Order attracted him because its form of life seemed to resemble that of the early Christians. "It was not invented by human prudence but by Christ. In it, the learned and the simple lived as brethren."

He was sent to the University of Paris, and having completed the Arts course, a necessary preliminary to further study, began his theology under some of the leading masters of the period, chief among them "our Master and father of happy memory," Alexander, native of Hailes in Gloucester, and the first Franciscan to profess theology at Paris. In 1248 Bonaventure, as a Bachelor, was lecturing on Holy Scripture, and in 1253, after commenting on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard, the famous textbook so long the standby of medieval theologians, he was granted his doctorate by John of Parma, Minister-General of the Order.

However, owing to the uproar raised by William de Saint Amour and the secular doctors of Paris, both he and Thomas Aquinas were refused admittance to their degrees. The two mendicant Orders appealed to Rome and the two future saints were ordered to defend the cause. For that occasion Bonaventure wrote his treatise *De Paupertate Christi*. In 1257, after the condemnation of the secular Doctor, both Bonaventure and Thomas received the doctorate by order of Pope Alexander IV.

The former's teaching days, however, were over, for in the same year, still under thirty-six, he was unanimously elected Minister-General of the Friars Minor. The Order was passing through a difficult time owing to the controversy between the "Spirituals" and the Observants. The former stood out for such small friaries as still delight the pilgrim to Grecchio and the *Carcere* of Assisi, and inveighed against large houses and churches, whilst also opposing the brethren going in for higher studies and living upon any material resources excepting alms. The other side protested that the personnel of the Order had altered. If Francis had once written: "the brother who comes to our Order not learned, let him not seek to become so," now many recruits were priests and clerics, and such must be taught. After all, the learned Anthony of Padua, formerly an Augustinian of Lisbon, had taught theology in the Founder's lifetime. The little band which had once gathered around Francis in the Portiuncula had developed into a great religious family, called to preach and instruct the faithful, and those large "preaching churches" were needed.

Patiently the General dealt with the crisis that threatened to become a schism. In a long letter to a friar, he answers the latter's difficulties point by point, agreeing with his correspondent whenever he can, and the only words remotely suggestive of reproach are: "I ask you, beloved, not to abound too much in your own sense." In a General Chapter held at Narbonne, the Franciscan legislation was codified and revised, and until 1273 the General occupied himself in visiting the provinces of the Order, making useful changes, writing his great ascetic and mystical works, and preaching far and near. And, as we are told, his subjects were astounded at the amount of work he managed to accomplish whilst remaining before all else a man of prayer.

In 1265, Clement IV wished to make him Archbishop of York,

but Bonaventure managed to decline the appointment. However, in 1273 he was compelled by Gregory X to accept the see of Albano and the cardinalate. In the following year, once more with Thomas Aquinas, destined to die on the way, Bonaventure was ordered to attend the Council of Lyons, where a short-lived reunion was achieved between the Church and the Greek schismatics. There he did good service, but on 14 July 1274, he died.

He was buried in the Franciscan church at Lyons, in the presence of the Pope and a great and distinguished throng, the Dominican, Peter of Tarantaise, himself also to be raised to the altars as Blessed Pope Innocent V, preaching the panegyric.

We may cite a few details as to his personality and person. He was, we are told, well made, good looking and healthy; "grave of countenance, angelic of aspect," so that men were struck with admiration. Impressed with his innocence, humility and gentleness, Alexander of Hailes used to say that "Adam did not seem to have sinned in Bonaventure." Always cheerful, he lived up to his own dictum that "a spiritual joy is the greatest sign of divine grace dwelling in a soul." He enjoyed taking his share in community tasks and was a devoted infirmarian.

In considering him as a spiritual theologian, we may remark that though hailed as the greatest light of his Order after its Founder, strictly speaking he is not "the Franciscan Doctor," which title belongs rather to John Duns Scotus. For example, asked whether the Incarnation would have taken place had man not sinned, Bonaventure replies in the negative. Along with the Dominicans and some of his own brethren, he rejects the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception as then understood; although with St. Bernard he holds Our Lady's absolute sinlessness, remarking that he has never heard of any saint who had not a special devotion to her.

His spirituality is outstandingly Christocentric, and in him there shines out that devotion to the Sacred Humanity for which the Mendicants were noted, albeit St. Bernard had been their forerunner. A great traditionalist whose works are "saturated" with the Scriptures, learned in the Fathers, no mean classical scholar, we can yet hear him singing a new song. Two of his works, *Vitis mystica* and *Lignum Vitae*, have supplied the first Nocturn lessons for the Office of the Sacred Heart, and passages

from the same source are scattered through the Office, especially in the hymns. Centuries before the feast would appear, he loves the expression "Christ the King." With him, the Passion and humiliation of the Son of God are never separated from His essential glory. The "grievous joy" of the Franciscan always marks the saint's profound devotion to Christ crucified, and he is one of those who have loved to dwell upon the majesty of God.

He treats of the spiritual life according to the classical "Three ways" but these compenetrate and the soul must live in all three, although at different stages of its development the exercises of one or other will predominate. There is nothing shadowy or merely poetic about his mysticism. It is raised upon a solid foundation of dogmatic and moral theology. The theological virtues, the virtues and gifts of the Holy Ghost, the divine indwelling of God in the soul by grace are his great subjects. Christ crucified is the way to the Blessed Trinity, and all the practices of the Christian life, above all prayer, careful avoidance of sin, examination of conscience, mortification, frequent Confession and Communion, devotion to the Blessed Sacrament and to Our Lady, must find their due place in the rule of life of anyone sincerely striving after holiness.

St. John of the Cross particularly prescribes the works of St. Bonaventure for study in the Reformed Carmelite novitiate, and we can see why. Both saints teach that contemplative prayer, even of a high order, is not an extraordinary grace, or a thing to be feared, that it is something quite apart from the extraordinary concomitants which may or may not accompany it, and which must not be desired, far less prayed for. All should aim at the highest union with God and pray for it, provided they are willing to pay the price and do what is in their power. Holiness is not the preserve of the few. If there are few real contemplatives, it is merely because few souls are sufficiently generous to make the efforts and sacrifices. As for the "extraordinary" occurrences, like every other master of the spiritual life, Bonaventure warns his readers that visions and revelations should rather be distrusted and feared.

"Rectitude of mind consists radically in love," he says, "but love cannot be rightly ordered if a soul love anything more than God, or as much as God, or if it loves anything for its (the soul's) own self. Man's spirit is not perfectly submissive to God unless

it loves Him above all and for Himself." It is the same old teaching, from Benedict and Bernard, down through the ages to Ignatius, John of the Cross, Teresa and the rest. "By Christ, through Christ, we reach Christ," he says again.

The practice of virtue must correspond with the prayer in its progress, if any case is genuine, and here, again like all masters of his craft, Bonaventure insists that humility must be thoroughly cultivated before there can be any question of contemplative union. "There is not a page, not a line in Holy Scripture that does not preach humility." "Believe me that if a man be truly anxious to humble himself, he can acquire more grace in a month than another in forty years." Yet the saint does not favour artificial or exaggerated humiliations, though he says they may help sometimes, but he reminds us that "temperance," in other words right ordering of the spiritual life, must have its place here as elsewhere.

He treats of the gifts of the Holy Ghost in several of his works. In language suggested by St. Gregory's *Moralia*, he tells us that each Gift "holds a feast in its day," and each day has its morning, its noon and its eventide. The morning corresponds to the Purgative Way, and he treats first of the Gift of Fear, since it is the beginning of wisdom which is the highest of the contemplative Gifts. But that does not mean that the soul is ever deprived of any of the Gifts, any more than it means that because, in the early stage of its life its chief work is to repent of its sins, and work at its faults, it is entirely deprived of any kind of prayer excepting beginners' meditation. Only, as the soul progresses, other Gifts will come increasingly into play, so to speak, just as meditation will be replaced by other forms of prayer and, as Bonaventure says himself, will simply drop out at the higher stages, having done its work.

At first Fear is more or less servile, but if the soul is faithful it develops into that loving, filial fear which, he says, is very valuable for advanced souls, because it inspires reverence, and Bonaventure is one of those who dislike anything savouring of casual behaviour—*la sans-gêne*—in our attitude towards God. But that Gift, as the whole Purgative Way, leads to peace, and when the evening of life is drawing nearer there is only the fear which is the result of a great love, and shrinks from the slightest offence offered to that God whom the soul loves intensely. When all wilful sins

and wilful imperfections have disappeared, "The whole soul is aflame with the fire of compunction." There remains, when the soul "rests in the Sabbath" of the prayer of Union, only that peaceful, abiding—but how deep only saints can teach us!—sorrow for every shadow of offence towards God, which is never depressing since it but increases the soul's realisation of His unspeakable love. He who proclaimed himself the chief of sinners could also say that in him divine grace had not been in vain.

Through Piety, we acquire that simple, childlike demeanour with respect to God, and learn to direct all our works towards Him, whilst our love of our neighbour becomes purer and more generous. There is, however, nothing childish, no posing in our religion, for this Gift banishes hypocrisy. It leads to wisdom, for as it has more play so the soul comes to see God more perfectly in its neighbour, and to become more humble. The same Gift also leads to an increasing love for divine worship, for the Church and all for which she stands, whilst enabling the soul to grasp the real meaning of obedience and obey "manfully."

With the Gift of Knowledge, the soul seeks for and learns all truth, gaining a right and sure judgment as regards what must be believed and done. It now especially reads and ponders upon the Holy Scriptures, and here Bonaventure quotes Augustine's saying that, for example, once the Passion of our Redeemer is really understood, nothing is too hard and we can bear it bravely; for we count as little what we may have to endure if we compare it to His Passion. In view of the controversy in the Franciscan Order in his day, it is interesting to note that although the saint teaches constantly the fundamental doctrine that sanctity is within the reach of the most unlearned, provided such have the necessary spiritual dispositions, nevertheless, he insists upon the importance of the Gift of Knowledge and its right use. It is natural for us to long to know, and whereas the ancients fell into error because they lacked the key to right knowledge, which is God-made-Man, we have that precious condition of all wisdom. This same Gift also enables us to rise from creation to the Creator, but the soul must see nature *in* God, and try to realise something of Absolute Beauty; so that it is fain to break forth into praise or, alternately, just remain silent in adoration. Such is the spirit of Francis's *Canticle of the Sun*, and the *Benedicite* of the Liturgy.

Fortitude prepares the soul for the perfect following of Christ by crucifixion of self and that, says the saint, is the great work to be done in the Illuminative Way. He warns his readers that it will not be easy. From A to Z, the spiritual life is ascetico-mystical, and here we find him speaking not only of the difficulties of old imperfect habits, and of those trials which God may send, but of *acedia*—that weariness in well-doing, the sheer spiritual fatigue of just “going on,” which will have to be faced as the wearing down and discipline of what spiritual theologians know as the Nights of the Soul shut in. By Fortitude the soul is helped to go forward despite all, whilst this Gift rectifies the concupiscences, safeguards the memory, understanding and will and, finally subjects all the powers to the Blessed Trinity, the goal to which Our Lord is the way.

With the Gift of Counsel, we enter upon the Illuminative Way. The soul rouses itself to be conformed to the divine will, as it is inspired by the Holy Spirit; it strives to avoid all wilful sin, to obey all the divine precepts, and inclines to follow the Counsels of Perfection. Once it has thus resolved upon perfect living, all its powers are purified: it is saved from making wrong decisions and continually inspired and instructed by the Holy Spirit. Its understanding is continually more enlightened, whilst its love becomes ever purer and more fervent. Here Bonaventure dwells at length upon the abiding presence within it of the Blessed Trinity, so that its life becomes continually more informed thereby.

Intellect and Wisdom belong to the Unitive Way, and are the Contemplative Gifts par excellence, so that we must see something of Bonaventure’s teaching upon prayer. He never defines “contemplation,” though he says much about it. Prayer is the secret of holiness and the only way thereto, and he confesses that he is amazed that so few people seem to be recollected and to enter into themselves. Mental prayer is the higher form and vocal prayer is ordained to it, though vocal prayer said in common, and above all the Divine Office, must always be carried out as perfectly as possible, and that whether recited in choir or privately, as when travelling, since it is the official prayer of the Church. We catch a glimpse into the spirit of the ages of faith when he reminds his readers that the simple faithful love to come into church and listen to the Office, and that it behoves religious in choir to see that such are not discredited. Always we find the

practical side in his guidance. For instance, acts of charity must not be refused on the ground of giving more time to prayer, nor must a superior be so intent upon guarding his own peace and recollection as to shirk the correction and training of his subjects. Another thoughtful reminder is to be found when, treating of religious, he remarks that they must not be content to "live like baptised children"; that is practising a negative sort of piety, blameless in a sense but satisfied with pious routine. A soul must be instant in prayer, take its spiritual obligations as seriously as possible, and strive for familiar friendship with Christ.

In the Illuminative Way the soul practises what later authorities call variously, Prayer of simplicity, "beginners' contemplation," "acquired contemplation," etc. This may be expected to follow on from earlier Meditation, above all on the life and Passion of Our Lord, which develops and simplifies into Affective Prayer. Such contemplation is not strictly speaking mystical; though there is an actuation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, albeit such is not sensibly experienced by the one who prays. Real mystical contemplation cannot be produced, even for a moment, by the soul's own efforts, nor can it be prolonged once God ceases to give it. But in the Unitive Way Bonaventure says we meet with "mystical contemplation," and this is what is normally known as Quietude. Thenceforth all progress is an intensifying of that. "The soul dies to the world and sees God," but there are not normally any extraordinary phenomena even then. The saint gives it as his opinion that one in whose prayer the element of adoration is tending to predominate increasingly is not far from the state of union.

In conclusion, something must be mentioned of his treatment of ecstasy which is exceptional. He calls the unitive life, in which the soul attains to the "Transforming Union," the "Ecstatic life," and those he terms "ecstatics" have reached the culminating point to which union with God can be reached in this world. He owns that such are rare, and that he knows personally of only St. Francis himself, whose last days after the vision of Mount Alverno were spent in that state, and probably Blessed Giles of Assisi. Yet we know from contemporary evidence that Bonaventure experienced ecstasies himself, and was seen in such at Paris. Possibly the explanation is that theologically he was an Augustinian, and St. Augustine had written: "It seems to me

that all the saints have been in ecstasy." For those of this way of thinking there is nothing abnormal in the fact that people serving God very faithfully, whose wills have become identified with His so that, as St. John of the Cross says, "There are no longer two wills, but one, namely God's," should sometimes be drawn "out of themselves." For them ecstasy is prayer of mystical or infused contemplation which has completely dominated both intellect and will; an actuation of the Gift of Wisdom more or less prolonged, wherein the soul enjoys an experimental union with God of great intensity, through the love that unites it to Him. Bonaventure speaks also of ecstasy which is an actuation of the Gift of Understanding, but it is not easy to see much, if any, practical difference. There need not be any extraordinary grace, such as a vision or revelation, and usually the ecstasy is not very long, though cases vary. Bonaventure does distinguish between ecstasy and rapture, which latter he does consider an extraordinary grace and characterised by pure passivity. However that may be, it is clear that he is considering ecstasy here as occurring so often that it seems more or less continuous and has become a state. Also, at this stage, it certainly weakens the body, which is not necessarily the case if it happens rarely. A simpler case to study is that of St. Thomas Aquinas, about whom we have more detail. On the feast of St. Nicholas, when saying Mass in the church of San Domenico at Naples, he had a long ecstasy the after-effects of which never left him. He refused to complete the *Summa*, declaring that such things had been revealed to him that all he had ever written "seemed but so much straw." Thenceforth he was constantly falling into ecstasy whilst the body was obviously failing. Three months later he died in transports of love and joy. Surely, before such divine masterpieces, distinctions and analyses must fail, and we find ourselves synthesising!

But if to live one's last days in ecstasy is granted to the very few, as the saint admits, Bonaventure's summing-up of a saintly life is within the reach of all who are willing to take the means: "The perfection of a religious man is to do common things in a perfect manner, and a constant fidelity in small matters is great and heroic virtue!"

A SCOTSMAN LICENSED

The Acceptance by Anglicanism of Presbyterian Orders

WHEN Anglicans foregather with Presbyterians to discuss projects of mutual reunion or of inter-communion, one wonders whether the strange story of John Morrison is ever brought up. The year was 1582. John Morrison had been some five years before "ordained and admitted to holy orders and the sacred ministry after the fashion and rite of the reformed church of Scotland, by imposition of hands, at a general synod or congregation of the county of Lothian in the town of Garvet." Thus reads the document which is to be found in the Register of Edmund Grindal, the Archbishop of Canterbury of that time. Morrison had migrated to England and sought employment as a minister in the Anglican Church. Grindal did not ordain him afresh, but through his Vicar-General, William Aubrey, issued a licence for Morrison to officiate in the entire Province of Canterbury: "We therefore, as far as in us lies, and as by right we may, approving and ratifying the form of your ordination and advancement [runs the licence of Aubrey] by consent and express command of the most reverent Lord Edmund Archbishop of Canterbury . . . grant and impart to you with all favour in the Lord licence and faculty to celebrate divine offices, to minister the sacraments, and to preach the word of God . . . in virtue of the orders which you have [already] received. . . ." (*in huiusmodi ordinibus a te suscepti*). Strype, the biographer of Grindal, saw that the licence was somewhat unusual and gave a version of it, printing the original Latin as Appendix XVII to his work.

The reader may be wondering where Garvet was, and whether the whole story is bogus, but nothing is more easily confused than a place-name in these old documents, when block letters were not insisted upon, and it may be that John Morrison spoke rather quickly. One can at least conjecture that he may have been speaking of *Garvald*, which is still preserved as the name of a telephone-exchange area in East Lothian, and was formerly a parish with Bara, St. Bothans and Mairham. John Morrison was its minister (at £100 a year) in 1574.

Grindal had been "sequestered" by Queen Elizabeth in 1577; he had fallen into disfavour, as some said, for not granting to the Earl of Leicester's physician a licence for bigamy, but from 1580 he was once more exercising his spiritual functions, though not fully restored to his judicial work. He did at least consecrate one or two bishops in that year, and if it had been a question of reordaining Morrison, it is unquestionable that he could have acted to do all that was required.

In 1578 he had caused Richard King, who had a previous wife living, to separate from Annie Jouse, to whom he had been married at St. Alphege, Canterbury, and it is clear that, if Grindal had been appealed to by Leicester on behalf of his doctor, he would have refused.

When the great debate on Anglican ordinations was raging in the eighteenth century, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, William Wake, was very active in supplying historical evidence to the French (and somewhat Jansenist) historian, Pierre le Courayer, to help him to argue their validity. In the course of his search into the records of his predecessors Wake had seen this entry about Morrison and wrote:

The licence granted by Archbishop Grindal's Vicar-General to a Scot Presbyterian to officiate here in England, I freely own is not what I should have approved of, yet dare not condemn. I bless God that I was born and have been bred in an episcopal church; which I am convinced has been the government established in the Christian church from the very time of the apostles. But I should be unwilling to affirm that where the ministry is not episcopal there is no church nor any true administration of the sacraments. And very many there are among us who are zealous for episcopacy, yet dare not go so far as to annul the ordinances of God performed by any other ministry. . . . And in the case you mention who can say how far a bishop may have power to licence a person not rightly ordained to officiate in the church committed to his jurisdiction? In the meantime you know your Schoolmen have been far from censuring Presbyterian ordinations; and yet their opinions had no effect to prejudice the episcopacy of your church in which they lived. And should I (erroneously) consider such an ordination valid, yet I do not see how that would affect my own orders, which I must always prefer exceedingly before the other. At present our constitution is otherwise settled, nor can any archbishop or bishop licence any man to officiate or administer the holy sacraments, especially the blessed Eucharist, who is not by episcopal ordination qualified for it.

This letter, written on 9 July 1724, is among Wake's papers at Christ Church in Oxford, but though it is noticed by his recent biographer, Norman Sykes, he does not comment on it.

Wake's contention that the Catholics were in as bad a fix as he was himself on this point of admission of Presbyterians is not quite relevant. It is true that some medieval theologians, holding that the sacrament of Order was one sacrament, held that the Pope could empower a simple priest to ordain another man a priest, but in such case the power of Order was present in the ordainer and the power of Jurisdiction was given by the Pope, whereas in Morrison's case there was no episcopal jurisdiction which had authorised his ordination in 1577 and

the presbytery of Garvald could not in Anglican eyes be seen to possess the power of Order. Thus the cases were not parallel. Wake must have been disturbed by the admission of his predecessor Grindal that "the aforesaid congregation of that county of Lothian is conformable to the orthodox faith and sincere religion now received in this realm of England and established by public authority." What had seemed obvious to the Elizabethan archbishop, when godly ministers were not so easy to find, was not so plain to the Georgian archbishop who had seen presbytery and bishop at odds. Grindal admitted in another letter that in Wales "there were divers that pretended to be ministers, and had counterfeited divers bishops' seals, as Gloucester, Hereford, Llandaff . . . being not called at all to the ministry." In such a time John Morrison, whose subsequent career is not known, must have seemed quite acceptable if he presented himself for licencing. It would perhaps have been recalled that, as Fox the martyrologist tells, "Richard Drakes was first made deacon by Dr. Taylor of Hadley—who was not a bishop—at the commandment of Dr. Cranmer"; what had been judged possible in 1548-49 would not seem strange in 1582, however embarrassing it might prove to be in 1724 or in 1959.

J. H. CREHAN

REVIEWS

SELF-PORTRAIT

The Memoirs of Field-Marshal The Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, K.G.
(Collins 35s).

THE EXACT RATIO of a man's character to his achievements may be difficult to assess, but it can never fail to provide a fascinating study. And when a successful commander, who is also something of a public figure, after a war publishes an account of his life it is certain to be read with close attention by the public at large, in the first place to see what manner of man this was who won the battles, and in the second place to read his explanation of how he won them. In this case the achievement, in outline at least, is tolerably familiar: the long haul from Alamein to Tunis by way of Tripoli and the Mareth Line; Sicily; the slow ascent of Italy to the river Sangro; and finally the triumphant campaign from the Normandy beaches to Lüneburg Heath. Of all these events leading up to the final victory the Field-Marshal speaks clearly and authoritatively: so much so that even on such points as may have since become matters of dispute, lacking the knowledge necessary for the forming of an opinion, one is inclined

to accept his word for what in fact happened. It may or may not be the case, for instance, that when he took over the command of the Eighth Army from Auchinleck in August 1942 he found a demoralised force prepared to make further withdrawals if necessary, and in a few weeks infused it with the spirit which drove Rommel out of Africa. Such, however, was the impression which, I think it is fair to say, most people received at the time. Again it is impossible not to sympathise with him in his complaints about the lack of understanding on the part of others (and not least of General Eisenhower himself) as to what he was trying to do, and succeeded in doing, in the land battle of Normandy. The plan was, not to effect a break-through in the Caen area eastwards towards the Seine, but by means of hard fighting there to attract and contain as much of the German tank force as possible and thus enable the Americans to break out in the west. How completely successful this strategy was a glance at the map opposite p. 257 in the book shows. Over and over again the Field-Marshal insists on the importance of a commander giving his attention not merely to the problem immediately confronting him but to what he is going to do after he has successfully solved it. There must be, he says, "a master-plan" governing not merely the battle which you may be fighting at the moment, but the whole campaign. It is this master-plan which he maintains was lacking in the operations of the Allied forces after the breakout from Normandy. Eisenhower's idea seemed to be to advance on a wide front, all the armies abreast, as far as the Rhine. This the Field-Marshal countered by pressing that he should be reinforced and allowed to push forward along the northern sector for the Ruhr. If this were done at once (in September) he was convinced that the war could be ended by Christmas. Eisenhower, however, tactfully disagreed. It had never been his intention, he said to "advance into Germany with all armies moving abreast," on the contrary "it is my desire to move on Berlin by the most direct and expeditious route, with combined U.S.-British forces supported by other available forces moving through key centres. . . all in one co-ordinated, concerted operation." With which somewhat sibylline utterance the British commander had to be content. It would appear that in fact American unwillingness to agree to Montgomery's "left-hook" proposal was based on the one hand on a suspicion that what he really had in mind was the clearing up of rocket-sites along the coast, and on the other the impossibility of holding back Patton who was already well ahead of the pack and in full career on the right. Nevertheless, once more, in reading the Field-Marshal's persuasive and well-documented account one cannot help thinking that had his plan been adopted it would have been better for all of us.

The book, however, is not merely a war history but the story of a life; and not the least interesting gain to be drawn from it is the portrait of the man himself. The impression one gets—and it is a vivid one—is of a man of principle, brave, single-minded, energetic and with strong likes and dislikes, egotistical, insensitive and engagingly vain. The same man who will talk of "my army," and go to great lengths to explain how little anyone else but himself had to do with the victory of Alamein is found a few pages later writing: "It is a strange experience to find oneself famous and it would be ridiculous to deny that it was rather fun." For all his eccentricities in dress and deportment, which understandably gave rise to feelings of suspicion and dislike in many quarters, he proves himself to be, at bottom, conventional in outlook. He is a religious man moreover, not easily deceived when it comes to matters of right and wrong, or discerning good from evil. (We Catholics do well to remember with gratitude the noble tribute he paid in the public press to Pius XII when the late Pontiff died.) And with it all a certain boyish *naïveté*:—Ike is "a wonderful guy"; a paragraph in Operational Orders issued to the Eighth Army ends with the words "there must be no 'bellyaching'"; Canada is "a proper land, fit for proper men to live in," and at the first meeting of the Army Council after he became C.I.G.S. in 1946 he presented a paper dealing with the post-war army. After a summary under thirteen heads, we read: "Attached to the document were notes on the fundamental principles of war." Apart from the principles of war itself the Field-Marshal has much to say on the subject of leadership. He held the view very strongly that, no matter how high his position or how large his command, a commander should be a familiar figure to every man in it. In France in the 1914 war he never once, he tells us, saw either Haig or French. He was determined that no one was going to be able to say that after serving under him. Hence the rushing about in jeeps, the informal speeches to units,—and the beret with the two badges. It was in the Napoleonic rather than the Wellingtonian tradition. There was nothing new about it. In a chapter called "My doctrine of command" the Field-Marshal says: "You cannot win battles unless you are feeling well and full of energy"; and in a way this sentence may be said to sum up his philosophy. It may not have the merit of originality; some might even dismiss it as having too much of the Boy Scout ethos about it; but for all that (and for this, let us not forget, we have all of us reason to feel profoundly grateful) it proved itself to be, when in the right hands and matched with the fitting moment, a sufficiently powerful weapon.

JOHN McEWEN

THE CIVIL WAR

The King's War, 1641-1647, by C. V. Wedgwood (Collins 35s).

THIS SECOND VOLUME of Miss Wedgwood's study of the Great Rebellion is centred on the period of the wars. More clearly than any other historian she sets out the actual nature of the conflict, the occasional campaigns, the local sallies, and the profound peace of the East Anglian counties into which the fighting did not penetrate. Her method is chronological, and she describes the complicated pattern of events in Ireland with great skill. This is paralleled by a clear account of Scotland. She sets out very plainly the policy that Cardinal de Richelieu traced out for his master.

The book is realistic in its approach to Charles I, and the changes in his policy are made very clear. Miss Wedgwood gives an illuminating account of the disastrous and continuing influence of George Lord Digby upon his sovereign. It seems that the type of the loyal cavalier appeals to her strongly. She allows little criticism in her accounts of the Earl of Ormonde and Prince Rupert. On the other hand it is perhaps a weakness in the book's structure that the King's opponents are treated in less detail. In the opening chapter there is an excellent account of the meetings of the Providence Company, of which John Pym was secretary and Hampden and the opposition lords among the chief shareholders. On the other hand this volume lacks detailed appreciations of the early leaders of the Parliamentarians. I have never seen it set out clearly who exactly were the Presbyterian peers and how they came to adopt this standpoint. These points are mentioned because it seems clear that the next volume will deal with the career of Cromwell and it would be of interest to have an account of the Parliament whose master he became.

This is in all respects the finest history of the years of Civil War that has so far been produced. The maps are plain and excellent, especially the one that covers the country between Oxford and Newbury and Basing House. Miss Wedgwood is particularly fair to the different minorities and she gives a sympathetic account of the various executions of priests during these years. Her sketches of the leading characters, which were so valuable an element in *The King's Peace*, also find their place in the present study.

The last section of this book is very sad. The author makes it clear how weak was King Charles's position when he set out from Oxford for the last time. There is a good account of his dealings with the Scots, and the book takes his story to the end of January 1647. He was then at Newcastle. "There was," she writes on p. 612, "no formal change in the treatment of the King. Some time in the course of the day he must have heard outside his rooms the familiar clanking and stamping of the

changing of the guards, as the Scots sentinels appointed by David Leslie gave place to the English troops appointed by Philip Skippon."

It is, perhaps, the military pieces which give this book its excellence, the defence of Worcester and the delightful account of Lyme Regis and its great siege. Among the descriptions of the principal battles, that of Naseby makes the most appeal. The author has such a detailed knowledge of and feelings for the English country-side. The production of the book is very good and the sixteen full-page illustrations are of real value, in particular the Honthorst portrait of Prince Rupert, now at Hanover, which has none of the heaviness given by his German blood and so apparent in the Van Dyck painted in his childhood. The portrait of George Goring is also remarkable, as is the more familiar double portrait of Lords Digby and Bedford. This has always seemed to me the most opulent of all the young male portraits that Van Dyck painted. The reader will, however, make his choice among them. They all illustrate admirably the period to which Miss Wedgwood has brought such judgment and such scholarship.

DAVID MATHEW

DESCARTES TO LEIBNIZ

History of Philosophy, Volume IV: Descartes to Leibniz, by Frederick Copleston, S.J. (Burns and Oates 30s).

BY THIS TIME there is no need to describe the general characteristics of Fr. Copleston's work. The appearance of the fourth volume calls only for the remark that, just as the scale of treatment was increased in passing from the ancients to the medievals, so it is increased again in passing from the medievals to the moderns. It will take two more volumes to guide us from Hobbes to Hume and from Wolff to Kant. Fr. Copleston seems to intend to come to a full stop with Kant. This would perhaps be a pity. If he is going to deal with the pioneers of the philosophy of history from Vico to Herder, we should expect him to go on to Hegel, Marx and Engels, not to speak of Dilthey and others who have contributed to the understanding or misunderstanding of history in recent times. The posthumous success of Hume through the interaction of radical empiricism and scientific positivism also needs explaining. But there is plenty of time for Fr. Copleston to reconsider his decision after a necessary and well-deserved breather.

In describing the systems dealt with in this volume as the great "rationalist" philosophies Fr. Copleston is using a conventional name, but he is by no means unaware of its ambiguity of meaning. Descartes and Leibniz were not rationalists in the sense of expecting philosophy to replace religion, nor did they differ from the medieval scholastics

in proclaiming the self-evidence of first principles. Fr. Copleston says that "the point which characterises Descartes, Spinoza and Leibniz is rather their ideal of deducing from such principles a system of truths which would give information about reality, about the world." Even this is scarcely satisfying, for the scholastics also entertained the ideal of a deductive science, as worked out in the *Posterior Analytics*, which would yield truth in application to fact. There is more in the suggestion that Spinoza and, in his degree, Leibniz were out to reduce the field of contingency, but this is hardly valid of Descartes. Much could be said in favour of regarding Descartes and Leibniz as the last of the great scholastics, seeking philosophical principles which would harmonise theology with secular knowledge at a time when scientific development had shown the necessity of modifying medieval Aristotelianism. With Spinoza, of course, we arrive at a self-contained philosophical system which is rationalist in the modern sense.

One or two comments of detail. Fr. Copleston agrees with those who hold that Descartes, in acknowledging himself by the *Cogito* as a thing that thinks, is assuming a doctrine of substance. While Descartes does indeed seem to regard the continuous identity of the self as too obvious to need discussion, this is hardly to be found in the *Cogito*, which is an analysis of a single moment of experience, in which the experiencing is seen to be indubitable whatever may be thought of the supposed object of experience. Hence the question of substance does not arise in connection with the *Cogito*.

With unusual dogmatism Fr. Copleston maintains that the Cartesian denial of intrinsic accidents cannot be reconciled with the Catholic dogma of transubstantiation. Since this is a point on which otherwise sympathetic Anglicans often reproach us with wanting to make them Aristotelians before they become Catholics, it is especially desirable not to exaggerate the implications of the dogma. Councils must not be taken as defining more than they actually state, and the Council of Trent deliberately chose the vague word "species" rather than the clear term "accidents." It is significant that the Eucharistic theology of the Cartesian divines was never formally condemned in spite of the opposition of the vast majority of theologians who were Aristotelian in philosophy. Hence we should surely admit that a distinction of substance and appearance is dogmatically adequate. We can then go on with a clear conscience to recommend the Thomistic analysis in terms of substance and accident as a notable achievement of theological speculation.

Fr. Copleston is inclined to agree with Bertrand Russell that there is an opposition between Leibniz's private speculations and his public orthodoxy. But are Leibniz's views really much odder than those

which have been peacefully associated with unswerving orthodoxy in other cases? At least he is not an isolated instance.

While other queries might be added, they do not detract from Fr. Copleston's continuing substantial achievement. This fourth volume should retain his old readers and acquire new ones. All we really want to do is to cheer him on as he completes the second half of his cross-country run.

D. J. B. HAWKINS

IMPRESSIONS OF DOWN UNDER

Australian Hopes And Fears, by Colin Clark (Hollis and Carter 30s).

AS A PERSON Mr. Clark possesses two great virtues. He is a man of integrity and courage. As a writer, these two qualities come shining through his prose and compensate for a style that is sometimes somewhat uneven. Coupled with the extraordinary wealth of knowledge which he undoubtedly possesses, they make everything he writes not only challenging, but, very often, of quite exceptional interest. Mr. Clark is a specialist who has never been taken prisoner by the science to which he devotes a very great deal of his time. We can be most thankful that this is so, for we would have lost otherwise a shrewd commentator of great ability. The book under review is a case in point.

A number of the critics have not liked this book and one never expected that they would do so. It is too full of a forthrightness, which does not hesitate to uncover some ugly sores in Australian social life and which does so in uncompromising terms. In the first paragraph of his preface, for example, Mr. Clark is quick to blame the Australian Labour Party for having reached a point where it is now "in danger of passing under Communist control." Later on, in his text, the author develops his reasons for this verdict, and they will strike the responsible reader, who is prepared to take an objective view of the Australian scene, as sensible and sound. So, too, will the judgment pronounced in these pages on Mr. Ben Chifley, who controlled the destinies of the Australian Labour Party from 1942-49, and Dr. Herbert Evatt, his successor, who has split its ranks today. It was to divert from himself the unwanted publicity coming to him from the Petrov affair that Dr. Evatt, as Clark recognises so rightly, opened up on Mr. R. A. Santamaria and his Industrial Groups that savage attack, which has split his Party wide open. Closure will come only when Dr. Evatt goes and, in the longer term, when the Party rids itself of the formula which allows near-Communists and Marxists, as well as active Catholics, to shelter under its umbrella.

The author's chapters on "The Growth of the Australian Labour

Party" and "Australian Politics" are perhaps the most fascinating in his book. But others, besides the Labour politicians, come under justified attack. He is extremely severe on the politicians of all parties and on the manufacturers who have sought with considerable success—and in the teeth of common sense—to develop Australian industry to excess; which means, in the context of Clark's essay, at the price of retarding Australia's enormous agricultural possibilities. The result is seen today in the restrictions placed on international trade by the Menzies Government.

Neither in this essay nor anywhere else is Mr. Clark afraid to say what he believes, and what he believes is very often contrary to the vaguely held notions and prejudices of the majority. Hence his opinions are not popular in many quarters and the directness with which they are expressed will produce in the Englishman, with his penchant for compromise, a reaction not far removed from the early stages of apoplexy. Certain professorial types in this country will not like being told, for example, how many harmful things in the modern world spring from the writings of the late Professor Laski. Neither will the average Englishman be pleased to receive the information that he is "quite unable to grasp the idea that any country, least of all a country in the British Commonwealth, should be governed on quite different principles from his own." These are hard sayings and they are absolutely correct; but they will not bring down on the author's head the benedictions of the political and university intelligentsia in this country. Very fortunately, Mr. Clark does not care one scrap about that. He is content to state the truth directly and in plain terms and without regard for irrelevant consequences. It is for that reason that the reading of this book is such a refreshing experience.

PAUL CRANE

SHORTER NOTICES

Our Man in Havana, by Graham Greene (Heinemann 15s).

THOSE WHO ENJOY distinguishing between comedy, farce and satire will find them all in Mr. Graham Greene's latest entertainment, sometimes separate, sometimes entangled. Thus the background of our Secret Service, at work in London, is as farcical as you will, but with a possibly bitter satire interwoven. When, however, you meet Mr. Wormold, trying to sell vacuum-cleaners in Havana, a simple soul, more naïve even than the Quiet American, in that all he asks is to ensure a safe and comfortable future for his only daughter Milly and is no crusader for social reform, you know that you are in for plenty of comedy. But no human comedy can avoid tragedy,

and tragedy in Graham Greene's books cannot avoid, sooner or later, the macabre. So we do not laugh with both lungs, as we read, though we smile constantly and even chuckle, as when Mr. Wormold's friend Hasselbacher proves to an indignant, almost tearful American that he exists only because he, Hasselbacher, chooses to think he does. But Mr. Wormold, to his bewilderment, finds himself recruited into our Secret Service, and being heavily paid for reports sent home in code, and having in reality nothing to report, ends by concocting a whole world of persons and events which is accepted with infantile seriousness in London. The poisoning of a dog infuses real pathos into a tragic-ludicrous episode robbing it of the cruelty which dominates in much of this book concerned with intrigue and lies: we are glad that Milly escapes from her wooer, Captain Segura, who divides the world into "torturables," i.e., the poor, and the others, though she does not come alive as Anne in *The Potting Shed* does: but after all, the book is an entertainment, and no one is asked to be quite real. All the same, we wish Mr. Greene would not introduce us so often to the *bas-lieux* of the lands he visits; we prefer the fresh air, of which there is plenty in Cuba too. But the final recommendation for the O.B.E. does indeed startle us into a two-lung laugh.

Three Cardinals, by E. E. Reynolds (Burns and Oates 25s).

AT FIRST SIGHT this book about Cardinals Wiseman, Manning and Newman was both unattractive and unimpressive. Its format was good, and was enhanced by a display of splendid photographs. But the clichés, of which there were far too many, were an irritation, as well as the discovery that three of the early chapters opened in precisely the same manner. Then a doubt formed in my mind as to the correctness of the author's decision to break the lives up sectionally, to present them as it were in parallel, and uneasiness grew in the light of the unassuming statement in the preface that the book contained nothing that had not already been published. Was this a book to persevere with? However, I might not have worried for, as I read on, the *Three Cardinals* increasingly convinced me of the author's wide and discerning reading, his skill in picking the essentials out of lives full of interest, and his ability to describe the inter-relation of three very different men and their impact on the times in which they lived. The book, while underlining the achievements of each of them, not surprisingly lifts Newman head and shoulders above the other two. He, in fact, is the hero of the cycle, a figure of greatness expanding out of an unending series of tribulations, many of them made for him by Wiseman and Manning. Mr. Reynolds excuses Wiseman for the disappointments in which he involved Newman, but in doing so he

is too generous. Some of these were really "beyond the beyond"—for instance, the premature and apparently unwarranted announcement of Newman's appointment as bishop—and must have caused acute and prolonged suffering. All that one can fairly say in Wiseman's defence is that his motives were never mischievous. What of Manning? His motives were most probably mixed; one of them a strong conviction of Newman's proneness to heresy and of his perverse Englishness, by which he meant certain national, anti-Roman characteristics, as well as a contempt for Catholic devotions, which he, and his trouble-making Roman correspondent, George Talbot, detected in Newman's utterances. Newman, for his part, found Manning utterly incomprehensible—"I do not know whether I am on my head or my heels when I have active relations with you." The author shares this attitude, and leaves us admiring at the end of his book how effectively the passing of time has rescued Newman from his critics.

Thoughts in Solitude, by Thomas Merton (Burns and Oates 10s 6d).
Christian Thought in Action, by Dom Aelred Graham, O.S.B. (Collins 12s 6d).

F.R. THOMAS MERTON tells us that these notes were written in 1953-4, and concern the contemplative life, yet not the monastic or eremitical life specifically. He does however recall to us, in these days when we hear so much of the "social" life, indeed of the Communist way of life which is not even social, that each man is a person, with his own life which exists beneath every disguise and risks being lost to him unless he returns to his true solitude. Often he may find that he knows himself less and less the deeper he probes, so that this research is dangerous in proportion as he cannot rest, in faith, upon the love of God. Every page of Dom Aelred's book deserves meditation, from the first of chapter one, "What is the Spiritual Life?"—what do we mean by spiritual, when it is hard enough to say what we mean by "life"? The book is really about the supernatural life of Grace, and its results in the life of day-by-day.

The second chapter, "Learning to Live," is, we found, of special value: to love is not at once easy; yet, if we must "know" in order to love, we cannot fully know until we love: all sin is a "break down" in love. Invaluable too is chapter 7, "Orthodoxy and Religious Experience"; Dom Aelred quotes for the second time St. Thomas: "The act of the believer reaches, not what can be said about the Thing, but the Thing itself." It reminds us of St. John of the Cross who wished to see not only the "silvery surface" but the gold beneath, and asked: "Send me no more a messenger. Who cannot tell me what I wish"; and indeed of St. Paul, who declared that we now see

God "dimly ('in an enigma') as by means of a mirror, but *then* ('hereafter') face to face." Chapter 8 tells us more about St. Augustine's Doctrine of Grace than many a long treatise does. On p. 51 there is an unlucky misprint: "His" for "this." This really precious book cannot fail to help readers to see deeper into their Faith and to pray with a prayer that puts a soul into every action.

Approach to Prayer, by Hubert van Zeller, O.S.B. (Sheed and Ward 10s 6d).

DOM HUBERT writes for the sake of those who "still need to be told that interior prayer is not for the elect only but for all": that is, presumably, for people who "say prayers" rather than "pray," who recite formulas almost as incantations without thinking what they mean or really wanting what they ask, but are obeying a tradition and would feel slightly nervous if they discarded it. Still, I doubt if any prayer is purely exterior: even if superstitions be weeds, they prove the ground they grow in is not sterilised. What we overwhelmingly need is an apostolate which shall awaken the mass of our population into praying at all. How many newspapers, novels, films, plays suggest that anyone ever does pray? Even religious events (dedication of chapels) are described in terms of pageantry, not prayer. However, Dom Hubert writes for those who already pray, that they may pray better, and consequently discusses the "principle," practice, difficulty, effects and protections of prayer; every line is sincere; every terse paragraph all but contains an epigram: and yet we fear that so many books *about* prayer may risk over-much introspection and self-consciousness while praying, or, despondency. However, he practically ends with the wise advice of Dom Chapman (was it not?): "Pray as you can, and not as you can't." The more our prayer consists of unselfish worship issuing into unselfish service the better. Some quotations (like that from Fr. Plé on p. 44) will be unintelligible to nearly all; and the disuse of capitals when pronouns (He, His) refer to God or Our Lord exasperates us and can even render some sentences ambiguous.

The Selective Traveller in Portugal, by Ann Bridge and Susan Lowndes (Chatto and Windus 21s).

WE WELCOME this fully revised new edition of a delightful book; it will surely entice many a visitor—but only the right kind who can venerate as well as enjoy this unique country; and arouse a most nostalgic ache in those who have visited it already. As usual, visitors should have a wise friend who will take them off the beaten track, for incomparable treasures are to be found in the

simplest peasant communities; and once more, we trust that not least among those simple groups visitors will show that perfect courtesy which they are sure to meet.

N.R.F.: Writings from the Nouvelle Revue Française, edited, selected and introduced by Justin O'Brien (Eyre and Spottiswoode 25s).

No one familiar with the literary scene between the two wars will need to have explained to him the meaning and significance of *N.R.F.* The *Nouvelle Revue Française* held an unrivalled position among the French reviews of the period. Justin O'Brien has selected forty-five essays from the *N.R.F.*, all of which have some interest, even if merely historical. It is enough to mention that Valéry, Gide, Claudel, Maritain and Bergson are among the contributors whose essays have been selected. Unfortunately the quality of the translations is not always up to the brilliance of the original: or to be fair, the various translators have done their best, but the genre involved inevitably suffers in translation. Those interested in the questions discussed in these essays will certainly have the desire and the ability to read them in the original French: but since back numbers of the *N.R.F.* are hard to come by, and no similar collection appears to have been published in France, we may be grateful to Justin O'Brien for his offering.

CORRESPONDENCE

Gonville and Caius College,
Cambridge.
16 January 1959.

The Editor, THE MONTH

DEAR SIR,

It would be ungracious of me to comment on Fr. Corbishley's notice of my book on Evelyn Waugh (*THE MONTH*, December 1958) without first acknowledging his notable desire to be fair to a book which rather disconcerts him. This said, however, I may be allowed to take up one or two statements which seem to challenge the critic's right to have a point of view at all.

His opening is ironical, and reflects the embarrassment of the innocent reader in finding that there is this thing called criticism. "We have, it seems, been getting Mr. Waugh wrong all these years. With the obvious exception of *Edmund Campion* and some aspects of *Helena* and *Brideshead*, we have on the whole been reading his books for fun. And now Mr. Stopp tells us...." But the innocent reader is not wrong, only perhaps a little unperceptive. Reading for fun is as innocent as writing

to entertain. But fun, though immediate in its impact, is not conscious of its own roots. The onset of critical consciousness may seem disturbing, and destructive of innocent pleasure, but there is still entertainment to be had at other levels. Take, for instance, Apthorpe's thunder-box. If this were nothing more than a field closet, these thirty pages of *Men at Arms* would not be funny at all, but only an extended joke in bad taste. It is wit allied to fantasy that makes it so delightful to the innocent reader—and to Fr. Corbishley. Hence my treatment of this property as a complex symbol of the personality.

But your reviewer feels that I have overplayed my hand, when telling the reader "how very profound and symbolic even his [Mr. Waugh's] most frivolous-seeming writing is." He has two ways of dealing with this. One is "I don't believe it," a fair expression of opinion. The other is "I'm sure the author wouldn't agree." Neither of these arguments will take him far. The second, in particular, the attempt to restrict the critic to inferences on the author's conscious intentions, would sweep away the whole basis of criticism. It is rather like the doctor expecting to take his diagnosis from the patient. The critic's case, which rests on his skill and insight for its persuasiveness, must be taken or rejected on its own merits.

But this Fr. Corbishley is not consistently prepared to do. In his very last sentence the innocent reader in him, who with Sir Toby Belch has for years been crying "Excellent fooling, i' faith," again expresses his surprise that someone should come along and write a book on the artist beneath the motley. "Important as it is to take Mr. Waugh seriously, one should surely not take him too solemnly, in the way, for instance, in which one might take Virgil or Dostoievsky." Like Fr. Corbishley, I find Virgil, Dostoievsky and Waugh three incommensurate phenomena. But unlike Fr. Corbishley, I do not see in this any reason why I should deny myself any particular approach to Mr. Waugh, and especially one which suggests itself to me as profitable after a close reading of the novels themselves.

If, however, it is this close analysis which Fr. Corbishley sees as solemn, I think I can help him here also, if you will allow me the space. Criticism is partly appreciation (saying what the critic sees in the book) and partly judgment (saying whether what he sees is good, bad, effective, misconceived). These are different operations, though when carried out skilfully the one implies the other. Good appreciation leads immediately to insight and judgment; perceptive judgment is based on instinctive appreciation. But the enforced extraversion of our national life gives undue weight to the neat but uninformed judgments of critical journalism, so that the literary scene is one of too many critics chasing too few hunches. I believe that the first full study of a living

writer should be primarily one of critical appreciation; in Mr. Waugh's case, particularly, this is something which thirty years of reviewer comment has conspicuously failed to provide. This was a process which Fr. Corbishley clearly found tedious; but with more patience he might have found the argument more persuasive. Certainly, the crucial passage from my interpretation of *Helena*, which he singles out as simply failing to carry conviction, said, I believe, exactly what in that book Mr. Waugh intended. So that an apparently oblique approach was in this case the right one.

The title which you, Sir, gave to Fr. Corbishley's review, "Mr. Waugh Amongst the Mystagogues" aptly summarised your reviewer's dismay at seeing the novelist in such un-Waugh-like company. But I find Mr. Waugh himself more tolerant. At least I have the satisfaction that he anticipated your review by including people like me in Helena's invocation of the Three Kings on Good Friday Night. "How laboriously you came, taking sights and calculating, where the shepherds had run barefoot! . . . Yet you came, and were not turned away . . . For His sake who did not reject your curious gifts, pray always for the learned, the oblique, the delicate. Let them not be quite forgotten at the Throne of God when the simple come into their kingdom."

FREDERICK J. STOPP

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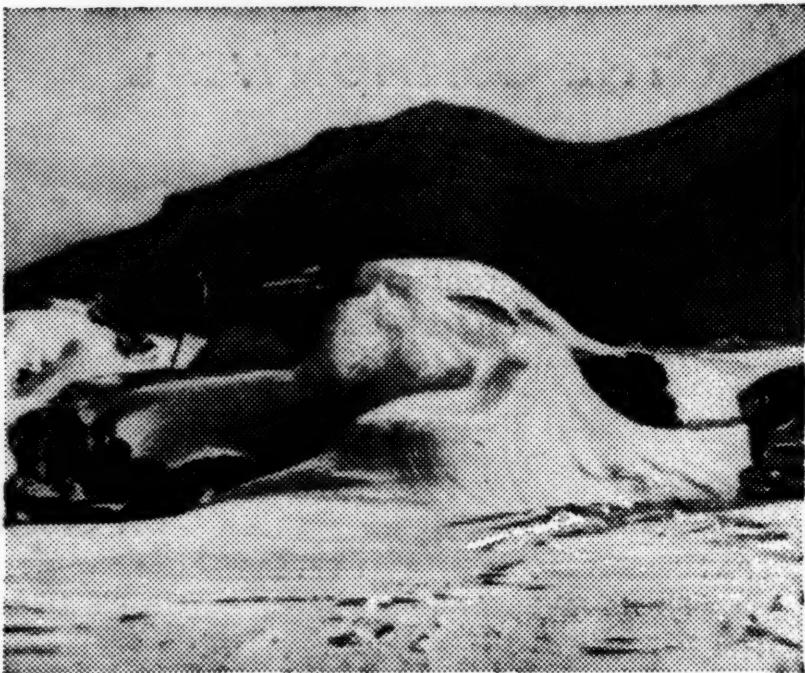
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